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REMOTE STORAGE

HALF-HOURS

WITH

FOREIGN NOVELISTS

VOL. I.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS ON THE FIRST EDITION OF

HALF-HOURS WITH FOREIGN NOVELISTS.

'The editors of the book before us are much to be congratulated on the way in which they have performed their work, so as to make it both entertaining and instructive. We have scenes in town and country, pathetic and humorous, domestic and adventurous, tranquil and energetic, picturesque and dramatic, mournful and laughable; and this constant change gives the book great piquancy and relish.'—SPECTATOR.

'A collection of exceedingly well-written notices of the lives of some of the best modern novelists of most European countries, and also translations of characteristic scenes or chapters from their books. There are scenes of humour and of pathos, of adventure and of love-making; and he must be hard to please who cannot find something to entertain him, open the book where he may.'—ST. JAMES'S GAZETTE.

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'Twenty-six typical foreign novelists are selected, representing among them almost every country on the Continent; one or more characteristic passages, usually chosen on account of their local colouring, are translated from each, and each selection is prefaced by a vivid and accurate sketch of the author's life and writings.'—ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.

'To enumerate all the authors from whose works the Misses Zimmern give extracts, to point out all that is worth reading in their book, would far exceed our limits. We must refer our readers to the work itself, which is full of interest and information.'—MORNING POST.

'The sketches of the stories, and the extracts from them, are admirably done, and they are not better done than the short notices of the novelists themselves. These are, for the most part, written with great care and good taste, and they add greatly to the value of the book. It would be difficult to over-praise the work as a whole.'—SCOTSMAN.

'The "Half-Hours" of the Misses Zimmern answer well to the promise of their name; and the extracts, which generally are happily chosen, give a fair notion of the manner of the novelists, while they are long enough to excite interest in the stories. The critical notices that preface the extracts are, for the most part, sensible and to the point, while they give proof of a unusual and intelligent study of a varied range of foreign literature. In many cases, where authors have produced their acknowledged masterpieces, the selection is all that could be desired. Nor is there any one of the subjects which does not make pleasant reading, while some of those which treat of Dutch, Scandinavian, Hungarian, Italian, and Spanish novelists will come to many people as new revelations.'—TIMES.

HALF-HOURS
WITH
FOREIGN NOVELISTS

*WITH SHORT NOTICES OF THEIR
LIVES AND WRITINGS*

BY
HELEN AND ALICE ZIMMERN

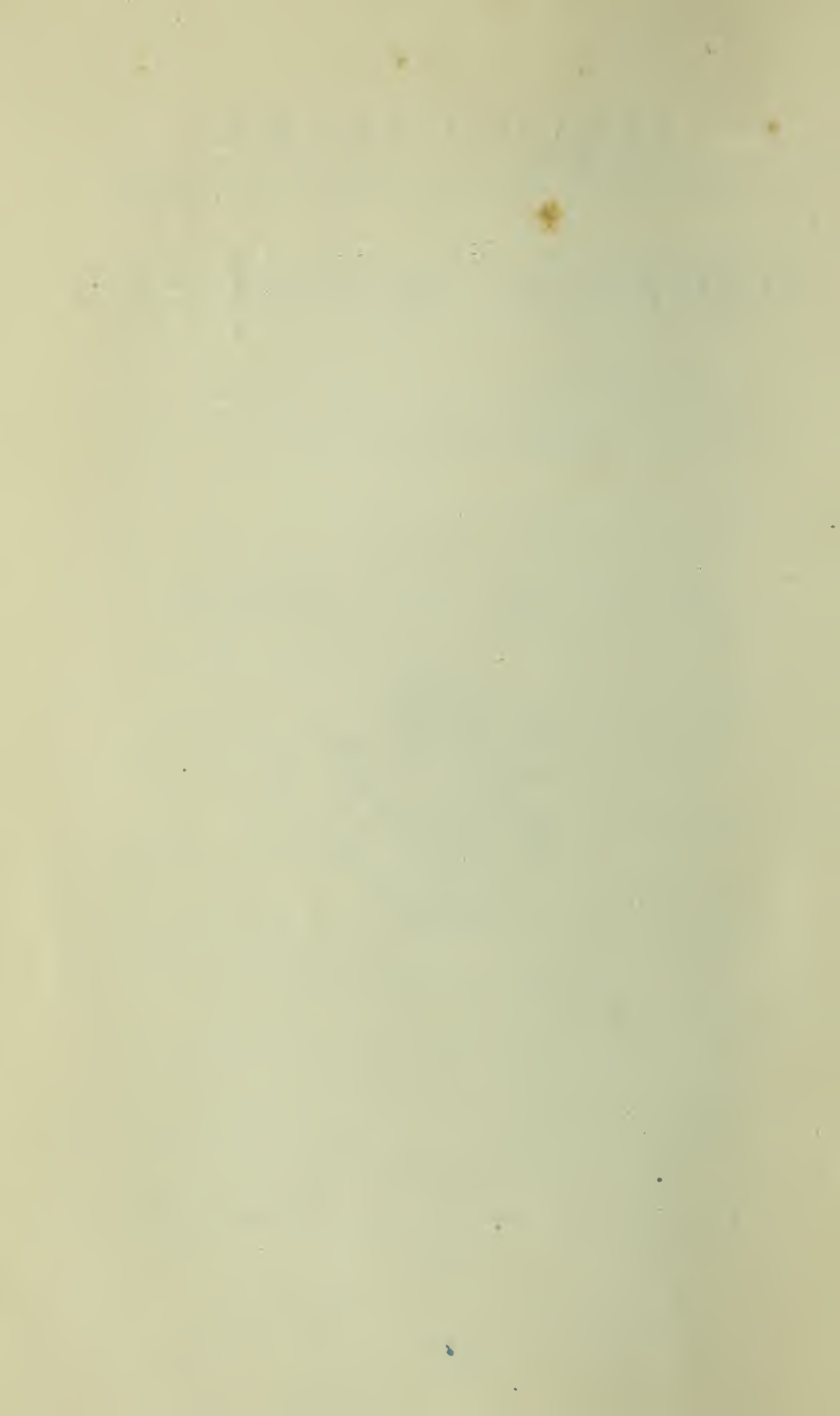


IN TWO VOLUMES — VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION

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1882

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English

REMOTE STORAGE

PREFACE.



SOME years ago a contributor to a distinguished quarterly review, in introducing a foreign novelist to English readers, wrote the following sentence: 'It may be received as an axiom that the light literature of any country—particularly its novels and romances—not only reveals the individual talents and dispositions of the writers, but likewise affords, indirectly, an insight into the general character of the inhabitants. Indeed it may be said to reflect to some extent the varying phases of national life.' This idea suggested the plan of this book, with the execution of which we have been intrusted. To anticipate any misunderstanding which might arise as to its character, we think it well clearly to define what is its aim. This is twofold: to give English readers unacquainted with foreign languages some insight into the writings of the best foreign novelists; and also, by

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means of extracts from these novelists, to depict the life, character, and scenery of the various countries of which they write. To this end it was needful to select such writers as are most popular and most national. Since these qualities are not always combined in one person, it has been necessary to omit many writers of great popularity ; such as, for example, the German novelist G. Ebers, whose novels deal solely with Egyptian, or early Christian history, and are thus placed beyond our pale. A further difficulty has arisen from the limited space which could be accorded to each writer, and the desire that as far as possible each section should be interesting in itself, and contain something of a story. This has made it occasionally necessary to choose such portions of an author's work as were most characteristic of his country, even though less characteristic of the writer himself, and hence not such as would have been selected from a purely literary point of view.

The selection of authors, again, occasioned some difficulty, especially with regard to France, which indubitably possesses the best contemporary novelists. Here choice was far from easy ; and being

unable to exceed a given number, we have been compelled to omit many of secondary but distinguished talent, such as Droz, Souvestre, About, Malot, and many others. Victor Hugo we have omitted advisedly, regarding his works rather as prose poems than novels proper. We think no apology needed for discarding Zola and his school. With regard to Germany, choice was not so difficult. Contemporary Germany boasts few novelists of first-class merit, and her current fictitious literature has never yet found much favour in this country. We have passed by the works of those popular writers, E. Werner and W. Hillern, inasmuch as they are all translated into English as soon as they appear; and it has been our endeavour, as far as possible, to introduce scenes from works not previously translated, although with the best authors this has not always been possible. When forced, from exigencies of space, to omit passages in our selections, we have purposely refrained from disturbing the reader's enjoyment by indicating these by asterisks. In conclusion, we have to acknowledge our obligations to Mdlle. G. A. Neveu, Mr. Richard Garnett of the British Museum, Miss

Elise A. Houghton (to whose valuable aid we owe the Dutch portion of this book), and various other friends, for kind and efficient assistance.

H. AND A. Z.

London, Oct. 1880.

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GEORGE SAND.

BORN IN PARIS, JULY 5, 1804 ; DIED IN PARIS,
JUNE 8, 1876.

GEORGE SAND.

THE writer to whom Mrs. Browning addressed her fine sonnet,

‘Thou large-brained woman and large-hearted man,
Self-called George Sand!’

was one of the most remarkable geniuses of our own or any age. An original and genuine artist, her best works will last as long as the French language, though many of them will survive as much for their manner as their matter, their style as their contents. For George Sand is a master of diction. Her countryman Michelet, himself no mean stylist, calls her the great prose-writer of the nineteenth century; while Thackeray says of her: ‘Her style is noble and beautifully rich and pure. She has an exuberant imagination, and with it a very chaste style of expression. She never scarcely indulges in declamation, and yet her sentences are exquisitely melodious and full. She leaves you at the end of one of her brief, rich, melancholy sentences with plenty of food for future cogitation. I cannot express to you the charm of them; they seem to me like the sound of country bells falling

sweetly and sadly upon the ear.' Our younger generation has a little neglected George Sand. We have grown to think her too idealistic ; her rose-coloured optimism clashes with our current pessimism ; her stories of impossible intrigue and adventure do not suit our more realistic taste ; her characters, often vague in outline, do not satisfy our more precise demands. Nevertheless, we cannot take up a book of hers without becoming entranced by its seductive grace ; and though we have outgrown the taste for many of them, yet a large number will always exercise an attraction over old and young. Her versatility of mind is unexampled. There are scarcely any subjects, any psychological problems, she has not handled ; and however opposite the opinions she upheld at various times of her literary career, she threw the whole weight of her genius into each theme as it gained the upper hand. She was largely influenced by her surroundings and friends, and her various intimacies mark distinct stages in her productions. Thus Michel de Bourges, the eminent lawyer, drew her into politics ; Lamennais initiated her into his poetical and broad Catholicism ; Pierre Leroux converted her to Socialism, and made her dream Utopias ; Chopin developed her love of music.

And the life of this woman was as varied and eventful as that of any of her tales. Of this life she has left a voluminous autobiography. It breaks off,

however, thirty years before her death, and is in nowise exhaustive; for while discursive upon points of minor interest, it draws a discreet veil over most of her impetuous aberrations. The daughter of an aristocratic lieutenant and a Parisian bird-fancier, already at the outset of her life Aurore Dupin saw widely different phases of life: the stately humdrum existence at the Castle of Nohant, near Le Châtre in Berri, where dwelt her paternal grandmother; the Bohemian surroundings of her Parisian relatives; the noisy bluster of her father's camp. When this father died, she was sent to live at Nohant, where she ran wild, dressed in boy's clothes, shot and rode, devoured all the books that came in her way, and imbibed her love of country lore and knowledge of country folk. For her tutor, an ex-abbé, was, like her grandmother, a disciple of Rousseau, and believed in the education of Nature. At thirteen she was sent to a convent, and for two years never stepped outside its walls. Here, for a time, her imagination was captivated by the Roman Catholic faith, and she desired to devote herself to religion. This view did not, however, suit her grandmother. In 1820 she was brought back to Nohant and freedom; a freedom that proved of short duration; for she lost her grandmother, and her friends shortly after arranged a marriage for her with the Baron Dudevant. The Baron was not, perhaps, a bad man; but in

any case he was a dull country squire, with no soul above his farm, and little calculated to satisfy a woman of this nature. Two children were born to them ; and for nine years this ill-assorted couple dragged on their existence side by side, till at last the Baroness could bear it no longer, and, taking with her her little daughter, sought liberty in Paris.

Accident made her turn to literature, after having tried to support herself in vain by painting. Together with Jules Sandeau, she wrote a novel, *Rose et Blanche*, that attracted some notice, and a second was proposed. Her partner, however, failed her ; she wrote it alone ; but, out of respect for their bond, adopted in part the pseudonym under which her first success was achieved, and which has become of world-wide fame. This novel was *Indiana*, the life-story of a woman of morbid sensibility, who has suffered under the marriage-bond. It is a wonderful work ; though not free from the faults of a first attempt, it yet showed no crudeness of manner. George Sand's excellent style flowed from her pen at once.

Parisian curiosity was excited as to the age, name, and sex of this new light. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* opened to her its exclusive pages ; she was regarded as an established author ; and from that moment advanced from success to success. Until her death she laboured indefatigably, and the flow of her genius was constant and steady.

To enumerate her works would be a tedious task. We will therefore content ourselves with naming a few that may be regarded as typical of her various themes and manners. In *Valentine*, as in *Indiana*, she treated of marriage. The scenes of *La Dernière Aldini* and *Les Maîtres Mosaïstes* are laid in Venice, and give full scope for that exquisite delineation of Venetian scenery that has made George Sand stand foremost among all word-painters of that city. *Spiridion* and *Les Sept Cordes de la Lyre* are works of imagination interwoven with a high-wrought philosophy. They represent the earlier aspect of George Sand's religious views, the foundation of which rests on a belief in progress, but which is here reared with fantastic and mystical materials. The same tendency towards a mystic phantasmagoria recurs in *Consuelo*, which embodies her views on art. *Le Péché de M. Antoine* reflects her socialistic phase. *Mauprat*, *L'Homme de Neige*, and *Flammarande*, her last work, are novels of adventure, full of spirit and well-sustained intrigue, written for the pure pleasure of story-telling, with no ulterior motives. *Mademoiselle de la Quintinie* depicts her later, less transcendental, religious views, full of true devotional feeling and high ideal aims. *François le Champi*, *La Petite Fadette*, *La Mare au Diable*, are all excellent specimens of the rustic tales in which her talents shine at their brightest.

George Sand is at her best when she is purely

objective and descriptive. Her metaphysical disquisitions are the least attractive portions of her writings ; nor does her philosophy always bear critical analysis ; it is too apt to be swayed by her caprices of the moment. Moral ideas are often perverted ; though her intentions are always good they are sometimes strangely misled by her passing feelings, which make her sophistical. Occasionally she sins against good taste. But all these faults are absent from her incomparable country idyls, which breathe sweetness and purity, and transport the reader into a purer and fresher atmosphere. The scenes are chiefly laid in Berri, and her love of country life and knowledge of the primitive language of the peasants have here full play. She was even able to restore to the language some archaic forms that still lingered in their mouths.

In 1838 Madame Sand was legally separated from her husband, and restored to her fortune. The Castle of Nohant was once more hers, and here she spent most of her time, surrounded by her children and grandchildren, and a faithful circle of friends. She died in 1876, retaining to the last all her vigour of mind and keen interest in life.

LA MARE AU DIABLE.

Where so much is excellent, it is invidious to specialise ; but *La Mare au Diable* may, perhaps,

be pronounced the most perfect of George Sand's tales for simplicity of theme and artistic presentation. The story merely relates the adventures of one single night ; the personages are a farmer, his child, and a peasant-girl, whom he eventually marries. All the characters stand out sharp and clear ; while the opening scene, which depicts Germain ploughing, is a masterpiece of delineation and language. Our extract is an account of Germain's second wedding, and tells of some of the quaint marriage customs that survived in Berri.

The description of the ceremonies connected with the marriage begins with the assembling of the guests in the bride's house, when they close and barricade all the doors. The bridegroom and his party then come and make a mock assault, and, after many entreaties and much parley, are at length admitted. The hemp-dresser, who is spokesman for the bride, has just agreed to open the door, and admit the bridegroom's party.

The Marriage.

The hempdresser then drew back the wooden bolt which fastened the door inside, at that time still the only lock known in most of the houses of our hamlets. The bridegroom's troop forced an entrance into the dwelling of the bride ; but not without a fight, for the youth who were quartered

in the house, even the old hempdresser and the old women, grouped themselves round the hearth to guard it. The bearer of the spit, assisted by his companions, must contrive to establish the roast on the hearth. It was a regular battle, although they abstained from blows, and there was no anger in the fray. But they pushed and squeezed one another so closely, and there was so much ambition brought into play in the trial of muscular strength, that the consequences might have been more serious than they appeared amidst the laughter and the songs. The poor old hempdresser, who struggled like a lion, got pressed against the wall, and squeezed by the crowd, so that he almost lost his breath. More than one champion was overthrown, and accidentally trodden on ; more than one hand that clung hold of the spit was scratched. These games are dangerous ; and accidents have occurred in them lately so serious as to make our peasants resolve to let this ceremony of the bridal gifts fall into disuse. I fancy we saw it for the last time at Françoise Meillart's wedding, and then even there was only a pretence of fighting.

The fight was hot enough still at Germain's wedding. It was a point of honour on the one side to invade, on the other to defend, Guillette's hearth. The enormous iron spit was twisted as in a vice under the vigorous fists which were strug-

gling for it. A pistol-shot set on fire a little hemp stored in bundles on a hurdle near the ceiling. This incident made a diversion ; and while some hastened to extinguish this germ of conflagration, the gravedigger, who had climbed up to the hay-loft unobserved, descended by the chimney, and seized the spit at the moment when the cowherd, who was defending it, was lifting it above his head to prevent its being snatched from him. Some time before the assault began, the matrons had taken the precaution of putting out the fire, for fear that in the struggle some one might fall in and be burnt. The facetious gravedigger, with the connivance of the cowherd, took possession of the trophy without any difficulty, and threw it across the andirons. The deed was done : no one was now allowed to touch it. He sprang into the middle of the room, and lighted a wisp of straw which was fastened round the spit, as a pretence of cooking the roast ; for the goose was cut up already, and strewed the floor with its scattered limbs.

Then there was much laughter and boastful talk. Every one displayed his bruises ; and as it was often a friend's hand that had given the blow, no one thought of complaining or quarrelling. The hempdresser, who had been squeezed half flat, was rubbing his sides, saying that he did not mind at all about it ; but that he protested against his friend

the gravedigger's stratagem, and that, had he not been half killed, the hearth should not have been so easily conquered. The women swept the floor, and order was established. The table was covered with cans of fresh wine. When they had toasted one another, and recovered their breath, the bridegroom was conducted to the middle of the room, and, armed with a little rod, was obliged to submit to a new trial.

During the combat, the bride had been hidden with three of her companions, by her mother, her godmother, and her aunts, who had seated the four young girls on a bench in a distant corner of the hall, and had covered them with a large white sheet. The three companions had been chosen of the same figure as Marie, and their *cornettes* (head-dresses) were of the same height ; so that as the sheet covered their heads and enveloped them down to their feet, it was impossible to tell one from another.

The bridegroom was only allowed to touch them with the end of his stick, and that merely to point out the one that he took to be his wife. Time was given him to examine them, but only with his eyes ; and the women, standing near him, kept vigorous watch to see that there was no cheating. If he guessed wrong, he might not dance all the evening with his bride, but only with the one he had chosen by mistake.

Germain, finding himself in the presence of these phantoms, enveloped by the same shroud, was much afraid of making a mistake ; and indeed this had happened to others, for the precautions were always taken with the most conscientious care. His heart was beating. Little Marie tried to breathe hard, and to shake the sheet a little ; but her malicious friends did the same, pushing at the covering with their fingers ; and there were as many mysterious signs as there were young girls under the veil. The square headdresses held up this veil so equally that it was impossible to discern the shape of a forehead through its folds.

Germain, after ten minutes' hesitation, closed his eyes, recommended his soul to God, and stretched out the stick at random. It touched the forehead of little Marie, who threw the sheet far from her with a cry of ' Victory ! ' He then received permission to kiss her, and lifting her up in his strong arms, he carried her to the middle of the room, and they opened the ball, which lasted till two o'clock in the morning.

Then the guests separated to meet again at eight o'clock. As there were a good many young people from the neighbourhood, and there were not beds enough for everybody, every girl from the village who was invited received into her bed two or three young companions, while the young men went to stretch themselves out pell-mell on the

straw in the farmhouse granary. You may well imagine that they did not sleep much, for they only occupied themselves with teasing one another, with exchanging jests, and with telling mad stories. At weddings there should be three *nuits blanches*, which are never regretted.

At the hour fixed for departure, after having eaten bread-and-milk seasoned with a strong dose of pepper, to give them an appetite—since the nuptial repast promised to be copious—the whole party assembled in the courtyard of the farm. As our parish had been suppressed, they had to go a distance of half a league to seek the nuptial benediction. It was fine fresh weather ; but as the roads were very bad, every man had provided himself with a horse, and each of the men took on to the horse one of the women, either young or old. Germain set out on the gray mare, which, well groomed, freshly shod, and decorated with ribbons, pranced and sent out fire from her nostrils. He went to the cottage to seek his bride, accompanied by his stepbrother Jacques, who, mounted on the old gray mare, took good mother Guillette up with him ; while Germain reëntered the farmyard, leading his dear little wife with a triumphant air.

Then the joyous cavalcade started on its way, escorted by the children on foot, who ran along firing their pistols, and making the horses jump. Mother Maurin was mounted on a little cart with

Germain's three children and the musicians. They began their march to the sound of the instruments. Little Pierre looked so beautiful that the grandmother was quite proud of him ; but the impetuous child did not remain long at her side. At a halt they were obliged to make, on account of the badness of the ground, he stole away, and went to beg his father to seat him in front of him on the gray mare.

'No, no,' answered Germain ; 'that might draw bad jokes down on us,—no, it must not be.'

'I do not mind a bit what the people of St. Chartier say,' said little Marie. 'Do take him, Germain, I beg of you ; I shall be even prouder of him than I am of my wedding-gown.'

Germain yielded, and the handsome trio rejoined the ranks, thanks to the gray mare's triumphant gallop.

And, in truth, the people of St. Chartier, although much disposed to scoff, and somewhat sneering about the neighbouring parishes united to theirs, never thought of laughing at such a handsome bridegroom, so pretty a bride, and a child that a king's wife might have envied. Little Pierre had a complete costume of mullet-blue cloth, and a red waistcoat so stylish and short that it hardly went below his chin. The village tailor had made it so tight in the armholes that he could not bring his two little arms together. And how proud he was !

He had a round hat with a black-and-gold ribbon, and a peacock's feather rising audaciously out of a tuft of guinea-fowl feathers. A bunch of flowers bigger than his head covered his shoulder, and the ribbons hung down to his feet. The hempdresser, who was also the barber and hairdresser of the place, had cut his hair in a round, covering his head with a basin, and clipping all the hair that projected—infallible means for guiding the scissors. Thus accoutred, the poor child certainly presented a less poetic appearance than with his long hair floating in the wind and his sheepskin thrown across his shoulders in the John the Baptist fashion. But the child was not conscious of this ; and every one admired him, saying that he was like a little man. His beauty triumphed over everything ; and, in truth, over what would not the incomparable beauty of childhood triumph ?

His little sister Solange wore, for the first time in her life, a regular *cornette*, instead of the print cap that little girls wear till they are two or three years old. And what a *cornette* ! — taller and broader than the whole body of the poor little thing ! And how beautiful she thought herself ! She dared not turn her head, and bore herself stiffly, thinking she would be taken for the bride.

As for little Sylvain, he was still in a frock, and fast asleep on his grandmother's lap : he knew nothing of any wedding.

Germain looked lovingly at his children ; and when they reached the Mairie he said to his bride,

‘Well, Marie, I have come here a little happier than on the day when I brought you home to our house from the Chanteloube woods, thinking that you would never love me. I took you in my arms to set you down as I do now ; but I thought that we should never again be together on the poor good gray mare, with this child on our knees. Ah, I love you so much ; I love our poor little ones so much ; I am so happy that you love me, and that my parents love you, and that I love your mother and your friends so much—nay the whole world to-day—that I ought to have three or four hearts to suffice me. Indeed, one is too small to hold so many friendships and so much happiness ; it is almost too much to bear.’

There was a crowd assembled at the door of the Mairie and the church to see the pretty bride. Why should we not describe her dress?—it suited her so well, the thin-muslin headdress embroidered all over, and the lappets trimmed with lace. In those days the peasant-women would not allow a single hair to be seen ; and though they hide under their caps magnificent masses, rolled up with white-thread ribbons to support the headdress, even to this day it would be considered an indecent and disgraceful action to show the head uncovered to a man. However, they now permit a little band of

hair to pass along the forehead, which beautifies them much. But I do regret the classic headdress of my time ; that white lace immediately touching the skin has a character of antique chastity which seemed to me more solemn ; and when a face was beautiful in this, it had a beauty whose charm and simple majesty nothing can express.

Little Marie still wore this headdress ; and her forehead was so white and pure that it defied the white linen to darken it. Although she had not closed her eyes the whole night, the morning air, and, above all, the inner happiness of love as pure as the sky, and besides, a little secret ardour restrained by modesty, had called into her cheeks a radiance as soft as that which the first rays of the April sun gives to the peach-blossom.

Her white kerchief modestly crossed over her breast revealed only the delicate outlines of a neck rounded like a turtle-dove's ; her myrtle-green wrapper of fine cloth marked her little form, which seemed perfect, but which must still grow and develop, for she was not yet seventeen. She wore a violet-silk apron with a bib, which our village-girls have done wrong in abandoning, and which lent much elegance and modesty to the figure. Nowadays they display their kerchiefs with more vanity, but there is no longer in their dress that fine flower of antique modesty that made them resemble Holbein's Virgins. They are more coquettish, more

gracious. Good tone was then a sort of severe stiffness which rendered their rare smiles more profound and more ideal.

At the offering Germain put, according to custom, the *treizaine*, *i.e.* thirteen pieces of silver, into the hand of his bride. He slipped on to her finger a silver ring, of a shape unchanged for centuries, but which the golden wedding-ring has since displaced. On leaving the church, Marie whispered to him,

‘Is it really the ring I wished for, the one I begged of you, Germain?’

‘Yes,’ replied he, ‘the one my Catharine had on her finger till her death. It is the same ring for both my marriages.’

‘I thank you, Germain,’ said the young wife, gravely and with emotion. ‘I will die with it; and if I die before you, you will keep it for the marriage of your little Solange.’

The Cabbage.

The wedding-party then remounted their horses and quickly returned to Bel-Air. The wedding-banquet was magnificent, and lasted, with intervals of singing and dancing, till midnight. The old men did not leave the table for fourteen hours. The gravedigger did the cooking, and did it very well. He was famed for it, and he left the fire between

every course to sing and dance. In spite of all this poor Father Bontemps was epileptic. Who would have thought it? He was ruddy, strong, and as merry as a young man. One day we found him lying for dead in a ditch, where his illness had thrown him at the beginning of the night. We carried him to our house in a wheelbarrow, and spent the night tending him. Three days after he went to a wedding, where he sang like a thrush, sprang like a kid, dancing about in the ancient fashion. On leaving a wedding, he went to dig a grave and nail down a coffin-lid. He did his work piously; and although his naturally cheerful disposition did not appear to be affected by it, yet his work left on him a dark impression which hastened the recurrence of his fit. His paralytic wife had not left her chair for twenty years. His mother is a hundred and forty, and lives still. But he, poor man, so merry, so good, so amusing, he killed himself last year by a fall from his loft on to the pavement. Doubtless, he was suffering from an attack of his disease, and, as usual, had hidden himself among the hay, so as not to frighten or distress his family. Thus he ended tragically a life as strange as himself, a medley of the lugubrious and the absurd, the terrible and the amusing, in the midst of which his heart had always remained good, and his character amiable.

But we have come to the third day of the wed-

ding, which is the most curious, and which has been kept up in all its vigour to our own days.

Just as the ceremony of the *livrées* is the symbol of the husband's taking possession of his wife's heart and dwelling, that of the cabbage is the symbol of fruitfulness. After breakfast on the day after the wedding commences this fantastic representation springing from a Gallic origin, but which in passing through primitive Christianity has gradually become a sort of mystery or comic morality of the Middle Ages.

Two youths, the liveliest and readiest of the party, disappear during breakfast, go and dress up, and at last return accompanied by music, dogs, children, and pistol-shots. They represent a couple of beggars, man and wife, covered with the most wretched rags. The husband is the dirtier of the two, it is vice that has thus degraded him; the wife is only unhappy and abased by her husband's excesses.

They are called the gardener and gardener's wife, and state that they are intrusted with the cultivation of the sacred cabbage. But the husband bears different titles, each of which has a particular meaning. He may be called the Straw-man, because he wears a headdress of straw or hemp, and because, to hide his nakedness, which is ill concealed by rags, he wraps his legs and great part of his body round with straw. He also makes himself a big

paunch or a humpback with straw or hay hidden under his blouse. Or he is called the Rag-man, because he is covered with rags. Finally he is called the pagan, which is a still more significant name, because he is supposed, by his cynicism and debauchery, to typify the extreme opposite of all the Christian virtues.

He appears with his face bedaubed with soot and wine-dregs, sometimes covered by a grotesque mask. A broken old earthenware cup or an old wooden shoe suspended by a piece of string is used to hold the alms of wine. No one refuses to give him some, and he makes a pretence of drinking ; then he pours the wine on the ground as a libation. At every step he falls, he rolls in the mud, he pretends to be a prey to the most disgraceful drunkenness. His poor wife runs after him, lifts him up, calls for assistance, tears out the hempen hair which peeps in dishevelled masses from under her dirty *cornette*, bewails her husband's debasement, and reproaches him pathetically.

‘ Unhappy man,’ she exclaims, ‘ see to what your disgraceful conduct has brought us ! I may spin and work for you, and mend your clothes ! You are for ever tearing and soiling them. You have eaten up my possessions, our six children are on the straw, we live in a stable with the beasts. Here are we reduced to beg alms ; and truly you are so ugly, so disgusting, so contemptible, that soon they

will throw bread to us as they do to the dogs. Alas, my friends, have pity on us, have pity on me ! I have not deserved my fate, and never has a woman had a dirtier and more detestable husband. Help me to lift him up, or the carriages will run over him and crush him like an old bit of glass, and I should be a widow, which would help to make me die of grief, although every one says it would be the best thing that could happen to me.'

Such is the part played by the gardener's wife, and her continual lamentations throughout the piece. For it is a veritable improvised comedy, performed in the open air, on the roads, the fields, in which every chance accident that turns up has a share, in which everybody takes part, the wedding-guests and outsiders, proprietors of houses and passers-by, during three or four hours of the day, as we shall see. The subject is always the same, but there is no limit to the additions to it ; and here are well displayed the mimic instinct, the abundance of buffoonery, the loquacity, the repartee, and even the natural eloquence of our peasants.

The part of the gardener's wife is generally intrusted to a thin beardless man with a fresh complexion, who understands how to play his part with an air of truth, and to make his burlesque despair sufficiently natural to amuse and sadden in turn as reality would do. These thin beardless men are not uncommon in our part of the country ; and,

strangely enough, they are often the most remarkable for muscular strength.

When the wife's misfortune has been made known, the young members of the wedding-party invite her to leave her drunken husband and come and play with them. They take her arm and drag her away. Gradually she throws off all constraint, grows merry, and begins to run now with one, now with another, indulging in shameless behaviour: another moral lesson, namely that the husband's bad conduct provokes and incites his wife to imitate him.

The pagan then awakens from his drunkenness, he looks about for his partner, arms himself with a cord and stick, and runs after her. The others let him run, hide themselves, pass the woman from one to the other, they try to deceive the jealous husband, and put him off the scent. His 'friends' try to make him tipsy again. At last he finds his faithless wife, and wants to beat her. What is most natural and true to life in this parody of conjugal misery is that the jealous husband never attacks those who have carried off his wife. He is very polite and guarded towards them; he wants to quarrel with no one but the guilty person, because she is supposed to be unable to resist him.

But at the moment when he raises the stick and produces the cord to bind the culprit, all the men of the party interfere and throw themselves between husband and wife. 'Do not beat her;

never beat your wife !' is the formula constantly reiterated throughout these performances. The husband is disarmed and forced to kiss his wife, and very soon he pretends to love her more than ever. They go off together arm in arm, singing and dancing, until a new fit of drunkenness sends him again rolling on the ground. Then there recommence the wife's lamentations, her despair, her pretended ill-behaviour, the husband's jealousy, the neighbours' intervention, and the reconciliation. All this is instructive in a naïve, even coarse, manner which betrays its mediæval origin, but which always makes an impression, if not on the newly-married couple, too much in love and too sensible on that day to need the lesson, at any rate on the children and the youths. The pagan frightens and disgusts the young girls so much by pursuing them and pretending to want to kiss them, that they run away in a fright that is by no means feigned. His besmeared face and his great stick, although inoffensive, make the little children scream. It is the most elementary form of social comedy, but also the most striking.

When this farce has been fairly started, the company set out to seek for the cabbage. A handbarrow is brought, on which they place the pagan, armed with a spade, a cord, and a large basket. Four strong men lift him on their shoulders. His wife follows on foot, the elders follow in a body with

grave and pensive mien ; then the wedding-party marches along two and two to the sound of the music. The pistol-shots begin again, the dogs howl more than ever at the sight of the dirty pagan carried aloft in triumph. The children derisively swing their sabots like censers.

But why this ovation to so repulsive a personage? They are marching out to conquer the sacred cabbage—emblem of matrimonial fruitfulness—and no one but this debased drunkard may place his hand on the symbolic plant. Doubtless this is some mystery, older than Christianity, which recalls the saturnalia, or some ancient bacchanalia. Perhaps this pagan, who at the same time represents the idea of the gardener, is no other than Priapus in person, god of gardens and debauchery, a divinity, who ought, however, originally to have been secret and serious as the mystery he shadows forth, but who has become insensibly degraded by the license of manners and mistaken ideas.

However this may be, the triumphal procession arrives at the bride's house, and enters the garden. There the finest cabbage is chosen, which is by no means a speedy matter, for the elders hold counsel and endless discussions, each person pleading for the cabbage that seems to him most fitting. The matter is put to the vote, and when the choice is made the gardener puts his cord round the stalk, and steps back as far as the extent of the garden

will allow. The gardener's wife must see that in its fall the sacred vegetable is not injured. The wits of the wedding-party, the hempdresser, the gravedigger, the carpenter, or the shoemaker (in fact all those who do not till the ground, and who, spending their lives with others, are supposed to possess, and really do possess, more wit and conversation than mere agricultural labourers) group themselves round the cabbage. One opens up a trench for the spade, so deep that one might suppose they were going to hew down an oak. Another puts on his nose a pair of wooden or cardboard spectacles ; he performs the office of engineer ; he approaches, retreats, displays his plan, stares at the workers, acts the pedant, cries out that they are spoiling everything, causes the work to be stopped and recommenced according to his fancy, and directs the labour in the most tedious and absurd manner possible. Perhaps this is an addition to the ancient formula of the ceremony, a mockery of theorists in general, whom the ordinary peasant despises intensely ; or hatred of the land-surveyors who regulate the register and assess the taxes, or of the commissioners of bridges and highways, who turn common land into roads, and suppress ancient abuses dear to the peasants. At any rate, this person in the comedy is called the geometer, and he does his best to make himself obnoxious to those who hold the pickaxe and shovel.

At last, after a quarter of an hour of difficulties and mummary, of which the purpose was to avoid cutting the roots of the cabbage, and to transplant it without injury, while shovelfuls of earth are thrown at the noses of the bystanders (so much the worse for those who do not spring aside fast enough ; be they bishops or princes, they must receive their baptism of earth), the pagan pulls the cord, and the cabbage falls majestically to the sound of the spectators' hurrahs. Then the basket is brought, and the pagan couple plant the cabbage in it with all manner of care and precaution. They surround it with fresh mould ; they prop it up with sticks and supports as the flower-women in the town do with their splendid camellias in pots ; they poise rosy apples on the ends of the sticks, and place branches of thyme, sage, and laurel all round ; they bedizen the whole with ribbons and streamers ; they establish the trophy on the pagan's barrow, and he must maintain its equilibrium and preserve it from accident. At last they leave the garden in due order at a marching pace.

But now when it has to pass through the gate, just as afterwards when it has to enter the courtyard of the bridegroom's house, an imaginary obstacle hinders its passage. The bearers of the load stumble, exclaim, retreat, advance again, and, as though overcome by an invisible force, pretend to succumb to the weight. While this is going on,

the bystanders cry out, urge on, and pacify the human yoke :

‘Gently, gently, child ! There, there, courage ! Take care, easy now, lower ; the gate is too low. Press closer together ; it is too narrow. A little to the left, now to the right ; come now, courage ! There you are !’

It is thus that in years of abundant harvest the ox-wagon, over-laden with hay and corn, is sometimes too wide or too high to pass under the barn-porch. It is thus one cries out to the strong animals to hold them back or urge them on. It is thus that, with skill and vigorous efforts, the mountain of wealth is made to pass through the rustic triumphal arch without any loss. It is especially the last cartful, called the *gerbande*, which demands these precautions, for this is also a rural festival ; and the last sheaf lifted from the last furrow is placed at the top of the wagon, adorned with ribbons and flowers like the horns of the oxen and the cowherd’s button-hole. Thus the triumphal difficult entrance of the cabbage into the house is an emblem of the prosperity and fruitfulness it represents.

Having entered the courtyard of the bridegroom’s house, the cabbage is carried up to the highest point of the house or barn. If there is a chimney, gable, or pigeon-house higher than the other summits, this burden must, at whatever risk,

be carried to the highest point of the dwelling. The pagan accompanies it to the top, waters it with a great can of wine, while a salvo of pistol-shots, and the joyous contortions of the pagan woman, celebrate its inauguration.

The same ceremony immediately recommences. Another cabbage is disinterred from the bridegroom's garden, and carried with the same forms to the roof that his wife is leaving to follow him. These trophies remain there until the wind and the rain destroy the baskets and carry off the cabbages. But they live there long enough to give some manner of truth to the prediction that the elders and the matrons make in saluting it thus:

‘Beautiful cabbage,’ say they, ‘live and flourish, so that our young bride may have a beautiful little child before the end of the year; for if you died too soon it would be a sign of sterility, and you would remain up there as a bad omen to the house.’

The day is already far advanced when all these things are accomplished. There only remains to escort home the godfathers and the godmothers of the newly-married couple. When these putative parents live at a distance, they are accompanied by music, and the whole wedding-party escorts them to the bounds of the parish. There they still dance on the road, and embrace them at parting. The pagan and his wife are then washed and cleanly

clothed, when the fatigue of their characters has not first made them take a nap.

They were still dancing, singing, and feasting at the Bel-Air farm at midnight on the third day of the wedding at Germain's marriage. The elders, still at table, could not go away for a good reason : they did not recover their legs and their senses till early next morning. Then, while they were returning home, silently and stumbling, Germain, proud and active, went out to yoke his oxen, leaving his young companion sleeping till sunrise. The lark, which sang as it mounted up to heaven, seemed to him to be the voice of his heart returning thanks to Providence. The hoar frost, which sparkled on the bare bushes, seemed to him the whiteness of the April flowers preceding the appearance of the leaves. Everything in nature was to him smiling and serene. Little Pierre had laughed and jumped so much the night before that he did not come to help him to lead his oxen ; but Germain was content to be alone. He knelt down in the furrow that he was going to recut, and said his morning prayers with such effusion that two tears poured down his cheeks still moist with perspiration.

In the distance might be heard the songs of the youths from the neighbouring parishes, who were setting out to return home, and who repeated, in somewhat hoarse tones, the joyous tunes of the previous night.

HENRY MURGER.

BORN IN PARIS, 1822 ; DIED IN PARIS, 1861.

HENRY MURGER.

HENRY MURGER'S name is inextricably bound up with the artistic land of Bohemia, of which he constituted himself the historian ; the gay, joyous, careless, laughter-loving, youthful region where illusions are at high-water mark, ambitions lofty, and resources low, where dwell the elected of genius as yet unknown to fame. Though not unfamiliar to other countries, Bohemia proper only exists, and is only possible in Paris, where life is blithe and bright, where the people by nature possess a lightheartedness gracefully combined with a substratum of sound common sense. Both Murger's life and his writings personify and reflect a certain aspect of French, or, more correctly speaking, Parisian, existence. Born in the lodge of a *concierge*, Murger was nursed on the knees of Malibran, who sang to him and awakened his love of music and verse. He had to work his way uphill along the thorny declivities only too familiar to those who are not aided by money or connection upon this arduous path. He did what he could—all was grist that came to his mill in the shape of work ; and when the detached sketches of Bohemian life, which he had published

in a daily paper, met with success, and made him an author in request, perhaps no one was more astonished than Murger himself. For some little time he continued in his self-made groove, then he tried to attain the due gravity of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* ; but this was not his proper sphere, and he finally returned to reproduce the old familiar figures of the Bohemian brotherhood. But though these later sketches were good, a bitter sediment seemed to have settled in Murger's inkstand ; he could no longer paint these lighthearted youths and maidens with the gracious *abandon* of his early pen—an ineffable something had vanished from his grasp. Still these other books are by no means to be underrated ; only the *Vie de Bohème* remains Murger's masterpiece, wherein he can be seen at his best and worst. It is a book that must not be measured with the narrow Philistine rule. There is no doubt about it, its heroes are somewhat jovial scapegraces, who, when they have money in hand, squander it recklessly ; who do not know how to regulate their desires by the demands of their purse-strings ; who cannot balance the debit and credit of their accounts. Their every-day existence is in itself a work of genius, a daily problem which they somehow succeed in solving by the most audacious mathematical devices. They have raised borrowing to an art, and would have extracted money from Harpagon himself. Their lodging is uncer-

tain ; sometimes they have a garret to cover their heads, though firing and furniture are often conspicuous by their absence, and the winds of heaven have full play through the broken panes of glass. At other times they are not even so comfortably housed, but live under the starry heavens. One of their number gave his address during a whole summer as the Avenue St. Cloud, the third tree to the left on leaving the Bois de Boulogne, the fifth branch. The future was always embroidering for them a stately academical robe, though it took long to manufacture. Still, in the end, Murger tells us that his heroes became men of more or less repute ; for according to him, the true Bohemians are only those that have the right and real stuff in them. He does not count as such uncomprehended geniuses or idle dogs who adopt art as a cloak for sloth and vice. So that for all their fun and frolic his heroes work seriously.

Bohemia, as depicted by Murger, was a result of the French Revolution of 1830, when the profession of art had been elevated into a worship, whose offspring was the romantic movement. Then these young madcaps existed in flesh and blood in the Quartier Latin on the other side of the Seine. The *Vie de Bohème* has been called the students' Breviary, in which they learnt to love and to forget, to suffer and be healed ; from which they extracted the secret of preserving buoyant hearts amid all pri-

ventions ; from which they learnt how to struggle and remain hopeful and courageous. It is a book both gay and sad. It shows the miseries of the human lot when it has to tussle with poverty ; but the picture is drawn by a hand that poetised all it touched. It is a poem of merry misery told in prose. Its sombrero aspects are softened by a gentle heart and a charming style, so that an air of unreality pervades the whole : we read, laugh, enjoy, weep, but we take nothing too much *au grand sérieux*. The quintessence of youth is preserved in Murger's writings, and we judge its follies with a tender smile. As he said of himself :

‘ Comme un enfant de Bohème
Marchant toujours au hasard,
Ami, je marche de même
Sur le grand chemin de l'art.

Et pour bâton de voyage
Comme le Bohémien,
J'ai l'espoir et le courage :
Sans cela je n'aurais rien.’

In the *Vie de Bohème* Murger painted the life he was daily leading : it was written from day to day, and therefore tears, laughter, want, discouragement, success, alternate as they do in daily life. Rodolphe, the man of letters in this Bohemian brotherhood, was Murger himself, under a slight disguise. Each chapter stands alone, and is complete in itself. As a whole, it would not bear translation into English ;

it is too un-English in thought and feeling, too foreign to English ideas to adapt itself to our tongue. It is full of slang too, the slang of the Parisian studio and editorial office. Yet a few specimens can be culled from it that will give in turn a notion of Murger's pathos and tenderness, his drollery and ingenuity. Space unfortunately only admits of two such extracts ; for the rest the reader must go to the book itself, and we specially commend him to the story of how Marcel managed to get a dress-coat on the occasion of his having an invitation to go to a real *salon* and an aristocratic party.

Francine's Muff.

Among the true Bohemians of the true Bohemia, I once knew one named Jacques D—— ; he was a sculptor, and gave promise of showing talent some day. But misery did not give him time to fulfil these promises ; he died of exhaustion in the month of March 1844, in the Hospital St. Louis, Ward St. Victoire, bed No. 14.

I knew Jacques in the hospital, where I was myself detained by a prolonged illness. Mademoiselle Francine had been Jacques' sole and only sweetheart ; he did not, however, die old, for he was scarcely twenty-three years of age. This love-story was told to me by Jacques himself, when he

was No. 14 and I No. 16 of the Ward St. Victoire—an ugly spot in which to die.

Jacques and Francine had met in a house in the Rue de la Tour d'Auvergne, where they had both taken lodgings in the same April quarter. The artist and the young girl were a whole week before they entered into those neighbourly relations into which dwellers on the same floor are almost always forced ; yet, without having ever exchanged a word, they already knew one another. Francine knew that her neighbour was a poor devil of an artist, and Jacques had heard that his neighbour was a little dressmaker, who had left her family to escape the unkind treatment of her step-mother. She performed miracles of economy to make both ends meet, as it is called ; and as she had never known any pleasures, she did not covet them. This is how it came about that they broke through the restraint of the partition-wall. One evening in the month of April Jacques returned home worn out with fatigue, having fasted since the morning, and intensely sad with that vague sadness which has no exact cause, which comes over us anywhere, at any time—a sort of apoplexy of the heart, to which those unfortunate beings who live alone are particularly subject. Jacques, feeling stifled in his narrow cell, opened the window to breathe a little. The evening was fine, and the setting sun was displaying its melancholy enchant-

ments on the hills of Montmartre. Jacques remained pensively at his casement, listening to the winged choir of springtime harmonies singing in the quiet of eve, and that increased his sadness. Seeing a croaking raven fly before him, he thought of the time when ravens brought bread to Elijah ; and he said to himself that ravens are not so charitable now. Then, able to endure this no longer, he closed the window, drew the curtain, and, since he had no money to buy oil for his lamp, he lighted a candle of resin that he had brought back with him from an excursion to the Grande Chartreuse. Growing sadder and sadder, he filled his pipe.

‘ Fortunately I have still tobacco enough to hide the pistol,’ he muttered, and began to smoke.

My friend Jacques must have been very sad that evening to think of hiding the pistol. It was his last resource in extreme cases, and it was generally successful. This is how it was done : Jacques smoked tobacco on which he had poured a few drops of laudanum, and he smoked until the cloud of smoke from his pipe had become so thick as to hide from him all the objects in the little room, and especially a pistol that hung on the wall. It needed some ten pipes to do this. When the pistol had become quite invisible, it almost always happened that the smoke and the laudanum combined sent Jacques to sleep ; and it happened just as often

that his sadness left him on the threshold of his dreams.

But this evening he had used up his tobacco, the pistol was completely hidden, and still Jacques was grievously sad. This evening Mademoiselle Francine, on the contrary, was particularly cheerful on returning home ; and there was no cause for her cheerfulness any more than for Jacques' sadness. Hers was the sort of gaiety that drops from heaven, and that God puts into good hearts. Thus Mademoiselle Francine was in a joyous humour, and she sang as she mounted the staircase. But just as she was about to open her door, a gust of wind from the open landing-window suddenly extinguished her light.

'Dear me, how tiresome !' exclaimed the young girl. 'Now I shall have to go down and up six flights of stairs again.'

Then, perceiving a light beneath Jacques' door, an impulse of laziness, combined with a feeling of curiosity, suggested to her to go and beg a light of the artist. 'It is a service that neighbours render one another daily,' thought she, 'and cannot be misconstrued.' She therefore gave two little taps at Jacques' door, which he opened, a little surprised at this late visit. But hardly had she made a step into the room, when the smoke with which it was filled suffocated her ; and, without being able to speak a word, she fell fainting into a chair, and let

her candle and key fall to the ground. It was midnight, and every one in the house was fast asleep. Jacques did not think it advisable to call for help, for he feared to bring his neighbour into an uncomfortable situation. He therefore merely opened the window to let in a little fresh air ; and when he had thrown a few drops of water into the young girl's face, he saw her open her eyes and gradually come to herself.

When, at the end of five minutes, she had entirely recovered consciousness, Francine explained her motive for having come to the artist, and apologised much for what had happened.

‘Now I am well again,’ added she, ‘I can return to my own room.’

And he had already opened the door before she perceived that she had forgotten to light her candle, and had not the key of her room.

‘Silly that I am,’ said she, applying her candle to the resin-taper. ‘I came in here to fetch a light, and I was going away without it.’

But at that very moment the draught in the room, caused by the open door and window, suddenly put out the light, and the two young people were in the dark.

‘One might think it was done on purpose,’ said Francine. ‘Forgive me, sir, for all the trouble I am giving you ; and be so good as to strike a light, so that I may find my key.’

‘Certainly, mademoiselle,’ answered Jacques, as he felt about for his matches.

He very soon found them ; but a strange idea crossed his mind. He slipped the matches into his pocket, exclaiming,

‘Alas, mademoiselle, here is a new difficulty. I have not a single match by me ; I used the last when I came in.’

‘This is an audaciously well-planned artifice,’ thought he to himself.

‘Dear, dear!’ exclaimed Francine. ‘I could easily get back to my room without a light ; the room is not so large that I could lose my way in it. But I must have my key. I beg of you, sir, help me to look for it ; it must be on the floor.’

‘Let us look, mademoiselle,’ said Jacques.

And there were they both in the dark hunting for the object of their search ; but, as though they were both guided by the same instinct, it happened that during this search their hands, which were feeling about in the same place, met each other ten times a minute. And as they were both equally clumsy, they did not find the key.

‘The moon, which is now hidden by the clouds, shines full on my room,’ said Jacques. ‘Let us wait a little : presently it may illuminate our search.’

And so, while they awaited the rising of the moon, they began to chat. A chat in the midst of

darkness, in a narrow chamber, on a spring night ; a chat, which, at first frivolous and insignificant, gradually touches on the chapter of confidences—well, you know to what that leads. Sentences after a while become confused, full of reticence ; the voice low ; words alternate with sighs ; hands meet and complete the thought which mounts from the heart to the lips, and— Seek the conclusion in your own memory, O young couples ! Recall it, young man ; recall it, young woman, who walk to-day hand-in-hand, and who had never seen each other two days ago.

At last the moon unveiled, and its clear light poured into the room. Mademoiselle Francine started from her musings with a little cry.

‘What ails you?’ asked Jacques, putting his arm round her waist.

‘Nothing,’ murmured Francine. ‘I thought I heard some one knock.’ And, without Jacques observing it, she kicked under a piece of furniture the key she had just perceived.

She did not want to find it.

* * * * *

I have promised you a muff ; and I will give it you presently, as my friend Jacques did to his poor friend Francine, who had become his mistress, as I explained to you in the blank lines above. She was fair, was Francine—fair and lively, which is not usual. She met with Jacques, and she loved him.

Their union lasted six months. They had met in the spring ; they parted in the autumn. Francine was consumptive ; she knew it, and her friend knew it too. A fortnight after he became intimate with the young girl he had heard it from one of his friends, who was a doctor. 'She will leave you when the leaves are yellow,' he had said.

Francine had heard this verdict, and perceived the despair that it caused her friend.

'What matter the yellow leaves?' she said to him, throwing all her love into a smile. 'What matters the autumn? We are in summer now, and the leaves are green ; let us make use of it, my friend. When you see me ready to leave this life, you will take me in your arms and kiss me, and you will forbid me to go. I am obedient, you know, and I shall stay.'

And thus this charming creature encountered, during five months, the troubles of Bohemian life, with a song and a smile on her lips. As for Jacques, he let himself be blinded. His friend often said to him, 'Francine is getting worse ; she needs care.' Then Jacques ran about all over Paris, trying to obtain the needful means for carrying out the doctor's directions ; but Francine would not have him speak of it, and threw the medicines out of the window. In the night, when her cough seized her, she would leave the room and go out on to the landing, so that Jacques might not hear her.

One day, when they had both gone to the country, Jacques perceived a tree whose foliage was turning yellow. He looked sadly at Francine, who walked slowly and somewhat musingly.

Francine saw Jacques turn pale, and she guessed the cause of his pallor.

‘Go along with you, you are foolish!’ said she, kissing him. ‘We are only in July; there are three months still to October; and by loving each other night and day, as we do, we shall double the time we have to spend together. And besides, if I should feel worse when the leaves turn yellow, we will go and live together in a pine-wood: there the leaves are always green.’

* * * * *

In the month of October Francine was obliged to keep her bed. Jacques’ friend attended her. The little chamber in which they lodged was situated at the very top of the house, and looked out into a yard, whence uprose a tree which daily lost more and more leaves. Jacques had put a curtain before the window to hide this tree from the invalid; but Francine insisted on his drawing back the curtain.

‘O my friend,’ said she to Jacques, ‘I will give you a hundred times as many kisses as it has leaves.’ And she would add, ‘Besides, I am a great deal better. I shall soon go out; but as it will be

cold, and I do not want to have red hands, you shall buy me a muff.'

During her whole illness this muff was her only dream.

On All-Saints-eve, seeing Jacques more distressed than usual, she wanted to cheer him; and to show him that she was better, she got up. The doctor arrived at that moment, and forced her to go back to bed.

'Jacques,' he whispered to the artist, 'be brave. All is over; Francine is dying.'

Jacques burst into tears.

'You may give her anything she asks for now,' added the doctor; 'there is no more hope.'

Francine heard with her eyes what the doctor had said to her lover.

'Do not listen to him!' exclaimed she, stretching out her arms to Jacques; 'do not listen to him, he lies! We will go out together to-morrow; it is All-Saints-day. It will be cold; go and buy me a muff, I beg of you, for I am afraid of getting chilblains this winter.'

Jacques was going out with his friend, but Francine detained the doctor.

'Go and get my muff,' said she to Jacques; 'get the best, so that it may last a long time.' But when she was alone with the doctor, she said, 'O sir, I am going to die, and I know it! But before you go, find me something that will give me strength for

one night. 'I beg of you, make me beautiful for one more night; and after that let me die, since the Lord does not wish me to live any longer.'

As the doctor was consoling her to the best of his power, a north-easterly blast blew into the room, and threw upon the sick-bed a yellow leaf, torn from the tree in the little yard. Francine drew back the curtain, and saw that the tree was now quite bare.

'It is the last,' she said, as she placed the leaf under her pillow.

'You will not die till to-morrow,' said the doctor; 'you have one night more.'

'O, what happiness!' cried the young girl. 'A winter's night! It shall be long.'

Jacques came back: he brought a muff.

'It is very pretty,' said Francine; 'I shall wear it for going out.'

Next day, All-Saints-day, while the Angelus bell was ringing, her last agony seized her, and her whole body began to tremble.

'My hands are cold,' she murmured; 'give me my muff.' And she plunged her poor hands into the fur.

'It is over,' said the doctor; 'go and kiss her.'

Jacques pressed his lips on those of his love.

At the last moment they wanted to remove the muff, but she clutched it in her hands.

'No, no,' she said; 'leave it me; it is winter,

and so cold. Ah, my poor Jacques ! ah, my poor Jacques ! what will become of you ? O my God !

And the next day Jacques was alone.

* * * * *

After some silent prayers the procession moved towards the cemetery. When it had come to the appointed grave the Bohemian brotherhood, with bared heads, grouped themselves around it. Jacques stood at the brink ; his friend, the doctor, supported his arm. In the midst of his sobs the doctor heard this cry of egotism escape from his lips,

‘ O my youth ! it is you that they bury.’

The Passage of the Red Sea.

Marcel had been working for the last five or six years at that famous picture, which he stated was to represent the Passage of the Red Sea ; and for the last five or six years this masterpiece of colour had been obstinately rejected by the jury. Indeed, what with going backwards and forwards between the artist’s studio and the museum, the museum and the artist’s studio, the picture knew its way so well that, had it been put on castors, it could easily have made its way alone to the Louvre. Marcel, who had ten times altered and retouched this canvas from top to bottom, attributed to personal enmity on the part of the members of the jury the ostracism which annually turned it away

from the Salon Carré; and in abandoned moments he had composed, in honour of the Cerberus of the Academy, a little dictionary of abusive terms, adorned with ferociously bitter illustrations.

For a long time Marcel was not discouraged by the cruel rebuffs which greeted him at every exhibition. He rested comfortably in the opinion that his picture was, in smaller dimensions, the proper pendant to the 'Marriage at Cana,' that gigantic masterpiece whose eminent beauty even the dust of three centuries has not effaced. Therefore every year, at the time of the Salon, he sent his picture to be examined by the jury. Only to lead the committee astray, and to make them fail in the determination they seemed to have of rejecting the 'Passage of the Red Sea,' he, without altering anything in the general composition, would modify some detail and change the title of the picture.

Thus it once appeared before the jury under the title of 'Passage of the Rubicon;' but Pharaoh, badly disguised by Cæsar's cloak, was recognised and rejected with all the honour due to him.

Next year Marcel spread over the foreground of his canvas a stratum of white to represent snow, planted a fir-tree in a corner, and dressing up an Egyptian as a grenadier of the Imperial Guard, christened his picture 'Passage of the Beresina.' The jury, who had that day scrubbed their specta-

cles on the palm-leaf-embroidered cuffs of their academicians' robes, were not taken in by this new artifice. They perfectly recognised the obstinate canvas, especially by help of a great devil of a particoloured horse, who was rearing at sight of one of the Red-Sea waves. This horse's coat served for all Marcel's experiments in colour ; and in familiar conversation he spoke of it as a synoptical table of low tones, because it reproduced, with all their play of light and shade, all the most varied combinations of colour. Yet once again, regardless of this fact, the jury could not find black balls enough to refuse the ' Passage of the Beresina.'

'How can they refuse it without all the vermilion of my Red Sea mounting into their faces, and covering them with shame?' muttered Marcel, as he contemplated his picture. 'When one remembers that there is a hundred crowns' worth of colour in it, and a million of genius, to say nothing of all my fair youth, which has become as bald as my felt hat. A serious work like this, which opens out a new horizon to military science ! But they have not had the last of it : to my last breath, I will send them my picture. I wish it to be graven in their memory.

'Ah, they are determined not to have me !' said Marcel. 'Ah, the Government pays them, lodges them, and gives them their cross only for the sole object of refusing once a year, on the 1st of March,

my canvas a yard in height on a stretcher. I see their idea plainly, I see it quite plainly—they want me to destroy my brushes. Perhaps they hope that by refusing my “Red ‘Sea” they will make me throw myself into it out of despair. But they quite misunderstand my human heart, if they expect me to yield to so gross an artifice. I will not even await the time of the opening of the Salon. From this day forth, my work shall be the Damocles picture suspended over their existence. Henceforth I mean once a week to send it to each of them, to their own homes, to the bosom of their families, to the very heart of private life. It shall disturb their domestic joys, it shall make them think their wine sour, their meat burnt, and their wives unkind. They will very soon become mad, and they will have to wear strait-waistcoats when they are to go to the Academy on committee-days. This idea smiles on me.’

A few days later, when Marcel had already forgotten his terrible designs of vengeance against his persecutors, he received a visit from Father Médicis. This was the name given among the brotherhood to a Jew called Solomon, who at that time was well known by the whole of artistic and literary Bohemia, since he was in constant relations with them. Father Médicis traded in all sorts of *bric-à-brac*. He sold complete sets of furniture at prices varying from 12 francs to 1000 crowns. He

bought everything, and knew how to sell it again at a profit. His business was concerned with everything, absolutely everything that exists. Médecis even dealt in the ideal. Médecis purchased ideas to make use of himself, or to sell again. Known by all the literary men and artists, intimate with the palette and familiar with the writing-desk, he was the Asmodeus of the arts. He would sell you cigars for a sketch of a *feuilleton* article, slippers for a sonnet, fresh sea-fish for paradoxes; he would chat by the hour together with writers whose business it was to send to the papers the scandals of society; he could procure you a seat in the gallery of the Parliament, and invitations to private parties; he could get your plays accepted at the theatre.

A few extracts from the chaos of his account-books will give a better idea than the most detailed statements of the universality of his business:

‘Sold to M. L., antiquary, the compasses used by Archimedes during the siege of Syracuse, 75 fr.

‘Bought of M. V., journalist, the complete works, uncut, of M. —, Member of the Academy, 10 fr.

‘Sold to the above, a review of the complete works of M. —, Member of the Academy, 30 fr.

‘Bought of M. B., one lot of social articles and the last three spelling-mistakes made by the Prefect

of the Seine, 6 fr., plus two pairs of Neapolitan slippers.

‘Sold to Mdle. O., a set of fair hair, 120 fr.

‘Procured for Madame —, modiste, the custom of Mdle. R. (Received for this 3 yards of velvet and 6 ells of lace).

‘Sold to M. Ferdinand, two love-letters, 12 fr.

‘Bought of M. —, 75 kilog. of his work entitled *Submarine Revolutions*, 15 fr.’

Coming among the Bohemians with that intelligent air for which he was so much distinguished, the Jew had guessed that he arrived at a propitious moment. In fact the four friends were at that instant assembled in council, and, under the presidency of a ferocious appetite, were discussing the serious question of bread-and-meat. It was a Sunday, and the end of the month. Fatal day and sinister date!

The entrance of Médicis was therefore greeted by a joyous chorus; for it was well known that the Jew was too sparing of his time to spend it on visits of politeness, so that his presence always promised some business to be settled.

‘Good-evening, gentlemen,’ said the Jew; ‘how are you?’

‘Colline,’ said Rudolphe, who was lying on his bed, and lazy with the pleasures of the horizontal line, ‘exercise the duties of hospitality; offer our guest a chair, a guest is sacred. I greet you in Abraham,’ added the poet.

Colline took hold of an armchair possessing the elasticity of bronze, and moved it towards the Jew, saying, in hospitable tones,

‘Suppose for a moment that you are Cinna, and take this seat.’

Médis slipped into the armchair, and was just about to complain of its hardness, when he remembered that he himself had once exchanged it with Colline for a profession of faith, sold to a deputy who had not the gift of improvisation. As he sat down the Jew’s pockets resounded with a silvery noise ; and this melodious symphony threw the four Bohemians into a pleasant muse.

‘This is my business,’ began Médis. ‘A rich amateur, who is arranging a gallery destined to make the tour of Europe, has commissioned me to procure for him a series of remarkable works. I come to offer to admit you to this museum. In a word, I come to buy your “Passage of the Red Sea.”’

‘For ready money?’ asked Marcel.

‘For ready money,’ answered the Jew, playing on the orchestra of his pockets.

‘Go on, Médis,’ said Marcel, showing his picture. ‘I will leave you the honour of yourself fixing the price of this work, which is priceless.’

The Jew placed on the table fifty crowns in beautiful new money.

‘Go on,’ said Marcel ; ‘this is only the vanguard.’

‘M. Marcel,’ said Médicis, ‘you well know that my first word is always my last. I will add nothing—reflect, fifty crowns, that makes one hundred and fifty francs. That is a sum, that.’

‘An insignificant sum,’ replied the artist. ‘In the dress of my Pharaoh alone there is fifty crowns’ worth of cobalt.’

‘This is my last word,’ replied Médicis. ‘I do not add one penny more; but I offer dinner to every one, as many different wines as you please; and at dessert I pay in gold.’

A week after this festival, Marcel learnt in which gallery his picture had been placed. Passing through the Faubourg St. Honoré, he stepped into the midst of a group, who seemed to be watching with curiosity the hanging of a signboard over a shop-door. This signboard was no other than Marcel’s picture. Only the ‘Passage of the Red Sea’ had undergone one more modification, and bore a new title. A steamboat had been introduced into it, and it was called ‘At the Harbour of Marseilles.’ A flattering ovation had commenced among the curious when the picture was revealed. And so Marcel returned home delighted with his triumph, murmuring to himself, ‘Vox populi, vox Dei.’

‘Economy,’ says one of Murger’s characters,— ‘economy is a science that is only within reach of the rich. You and I are ignorant of its first principles.’ To the end of his days Murger remained in Bohemia, and lived in an atmosphere of duns, debts, and shifts. Work could have been his in plenty ; but he would not work unless obliged or in the mood ; he would enjoy existence, not labour it away. By and by he began to withdraw from Paris to the lovely village of Marlotte, that stands on the skirts of the Forest of Fontainebleau. Here he wrote, and relished life, and with this spot his image has become associated.

Murger had laid it down as an axiom that Bohemia is the preface to the Academy, the Hospital, or the Morgue. He was never allowed to pass the threshold of the first institution ; probably his gambols would have disturbed the grave slumbers of that stately body. He was saved from the third ; he was successful, and was not driven to the last terrible resource of the unfortunate artist ; but the second claimed him as her own. An irregular life, an abuse of coffee, late hours, privations, did their work surely and swiftly. At the early age of thirty-nine, Henry Murger breathed his last in the hospital.

His faithful Bohemian brethren buried him at Marlotte under the trees he had loved so well.

AUERBACH.

BORN IN NORDSTETTEN, FEB. 28, 1812 ; NOW LIVING
IN BERLIN.

AUERBACH.

THE fame of Berthold Auerbach, which is not only German, but European, is entwined with the district that gave him birth. His *Black Forest Stories* opened out quite a new branch of rustic tales, and will be read and remembered long after his more ambitious, but less pleasing, efforts are forgotten. Born in a remote village of the Black Forest, Auerbach passed his childhood in his native hamlet, and thus early became acquainted with the strange manners and customs that yet lingered among this rural population, and which he was destined to preserve for the world. He had been intended for a theological career; but he soon abandoned this to devote himself to philosophy, history, and literature. Spinoza was the hero of his first literary attempt, and it is an excellent biographical romance, though by no means characteristic of the Auerbach who will go down to posterity. We must judge this writer neither from his first nor his last works, but from those of his middle period. It was then he wrote his village tales, by far the most genuine, spontaneous, and artistic of his creations.

In these tales he has depicted the simple incidents of the every-day life of the Black Forester, with all the peculiar traits which still make this folk an individual people, and which were yet more strongly marked before the construction of the wonderful railway that now intersects the once secluded valleys. There are no stirring adventures in these tales ; no art has been employed to round a finished plot ; they are by no means always or often well proportioned, and at times are verbose and diffuse. Still these very defects help to render them yet truer, for they reflect the peculiarities of the peasant heroes, who are uncouth and boorish, whose words come slowly and deliberately, who are apt to digress in conversation, to whom time is no object, and our modern hurry a thing unknown. Sometimes pathetic, sometimes humorous, these stories show different aspects of human life and character as they manifest themselves in the narrow framework of a hamlet. They are a series of *genre* pictures, developed with minutiae of detail. The language is simple, such as the peasant would speak, and the idiomatic peculiarities of the Black Forest dialect are carefully preserved. This employment of dialect has, however, with true artistic feeling on the part of the author, not been exaggerated to the point of weariness. He only puts it in here and there to keep before our memory that it is peasants who are speaking, and thus sharpens

the outline of their native idiosyncrasies. His grasp of character and poetic insight into psychological motives are very remarkable. In Auerbach's pages we indubitably get at the feelings of this peasant population, even if, as is mostly the case, the author a little idealises his personages. Still, as a whole, these idyls of country life are handled with a realistic touch that enhances their fidelity to nature. Few, however, if any, of Auerbach's stories are told for the mere pleasure of storytelling. In this respect one great motive unites all the different themes that have sprung from his facile pen. This motive is a deep love for humanity and the cause of progress, a sympathy for the poor and ill-used, a revolt against all oppressions exercised by Church or State, against all that is unnatural and calculated to restrict the freedom of the individual. For this purpose he had a specially fortunate scene of action in the Black Forest, that remote corner of Germany where the elements of political freedom had not yet been crushed out of life by military rigorism. The peasant who tills his own land is the most conservative of men; he is afraid of any innovations, lest it should interfere with his covenanted rights. Many of the village communes exercise a form of self-government, which, though only exhibited in a narrow compass, engenders a spirit of sturdy independence that distinguishes the peasant from the citizen. And this

trait, which is particularly marked in the Black Forest, has been well brought out by Auerbach. It is specially notable in the story of which we quote a part. *Befehlerles* ('Little Commands') illustrates incisively the bad effect of a bureaucracy upon a people—how it either stupefies them or drives them to resistance. These peasants are still healthy and unspoilt, they therefore resist. The bureaucracy does not like anything that recalls the commune and its ancient independence, and attacks its old rights with petty restrictive regulations. One interdict succeeds another until at last the men are angered, and there occurs the scene described below.

Auerbach is also fortunate when he contrasts the village and the town, nature and culture. This is happily illustrated by *Ivo*, the story of a boy who was to have been a priest, but who could not resign himself to the limitations and confinements of this career.

From these shorter stories, which are his masterpieces, Auerbach turned to novels of the same class. His *Edelweiss*, *Joseph im Schnee*, and *Barfüßle* have all been translated into English, and are better known than his shorter but more excellent village tales. Though finely conceived and well told, in these romances Auerbach had already fallen into the sentimental falsetto that disfigures his larger works. He now proceeded to more ambitious efforts. In his own words, he 'undertook

to treat individual problems of speculative ethics in so-called philosophical novels, to be made up, not so much of events and actual conflicts in life, as of conversations and the unfolding of definite objects of thought.' *Auf der Höhe* ('On the Heights') and *Das Landhaus am Rhein* ('The Country House on the Rhine') were the results of this change of ground ; didactic, diffuse romances which have not much appealed to English readers, though they are accessible to them in fair translations. Of late, Auerbach has even attempted to write plays ; but here he has failed entirely. Though acted at Berlin, out of compliment to the veteran author, they only achieved a *succès d'estime*. Auerbach's best is—and will remain—his village tales.

The scene of our story is laid in a little village of the Black Forest. In these villages the peasants own the forests, commune, and other lands, of which they have the management under the control of the government commissioner of forests. They have, therefore, a right to self-government in all matters relating to their property ; and the petty police is in the hands of one of their number, called Schultheiss or Bailiff, who is assisted by some of the most respectable villagers. Above the Bailiff stands the Oberamtmann or Sheriff, an officer appointed by the crown. The story turns upon the unwarrantable interference of this functionary in the rights of the villagers, and shows

how this was resented. The first part of the story treats of a custom of planting what were called may-trees before the houses at Whitsuntide, which was forbidden by the sheriff, as it had led to trespasses in the forests. The second part shows the means by which the sheriff tried to put a stop to such offences altogether.

The Axe.

With this story is connected another one of more general importance. The planting of may-poles, as well as other offences against the forest laws, induced the sheriff to issue an order that had for some time been at the end of his pen. It was a privilege and custom of very old standing among the peasants of the Black Forest to carry a little hand-axe on their left arm when going across country, *i.e.* from one village to another. Only the married men bear this token, but not the unmarried men or 'boys,' as they are called. It may be that, as report says, this is still a survival of the universal custom of bearing arms.

On Whit-Sunday, in all the villages of the district, the following proclamation might have been read on the black board of the court-house :

'Whereas it has been brought to our notice, that much trespassing in the woods has been caused by the purposeless carrying of axes, it is herewith

publicly made known that, from this day forth, whoever shall be found ranging about on the road or in the wood with an axe, shall account circumstantially to the gamekeeper, field, or wood-ranger, as the case may be, for what purpose he bears the axe ; and in default of so doing, he shall be liable for the first offence to a fine of one reichsthaler ; for the second, to a fine of three reichsthalers ; and for a third offence, to imprisonment for a period of one to four weeks.

RELLINGS, *Sheriff*’

After afternoon service many peasants stood before the court-house. Mathes, who now also belonged to the married men, read the proclamation aloud. All shook their heads, and muttered curses and imprecations ; only the old bailiff said aloud, ‘ That would not have happened formerly : those are our rights.’

Then the Buchmaier was seen coming down from the upper village with his axe on his arm ; he was a strong burly man, in his best years, not tall, but broad-shouldered and stout ; his shirt was puffed up a little about his hips, round his short leathern breeches. Between his open red waistcoat could be seen the broad crossband of the braces fastened by strings, which, being of some coloured material, looked from a distance like a pistol-belt. His three-cornered hat was perched on a head rather too small in proportion, whose

mild features had an expression of almost womanly softness, especially about the mouth and chin ; the large sparkling blue eyes, with the raised dark eyebrows, indicated clearness and manly confidence.

Mathes sprang to meet the Buchmaier, told him of the notice, and said,

‘Cousin, you are none of you true council-men if you put up with that.’

The Buchmaier continued his measured steps, without hurrying himself in the least ; he went straight towards the board. All stepped aside so that he might read more easily. He pushed his hat back a little ; expectant silence reigned around. When the Buchmaier had finished reading it in an undertone, he struck the top of his hat with the palm of his hand, pressing it more firmly on to his head : that promised something adventurous. Thereupon he calmly took his axe from his left arm, and with the exclamation, ‘There!’ he threw it at the black board right into the middle of the notice. Then he turned to the bystanders, and said,

‘We are free men and members of the common council : without an official meeting, without the consent of all the council, no such proclamation can be issued. I should like to know whether the clerks are to be everything and we nothing any more ; and I say, even if the matter should have to go to the king, we must not put up with it. Whoever agrees with me, let him take my axe there and hit it once

more into the board.' Mathes was the first to seize it ; but the Buchmaier held back his arm, and said, 'Let the older people come first.'

This word had the desired effect on the timid and wavering, who were taken aback by the Buchmaier's deed, and did not know what they should do. The old bailiff was the first to direct his blow with trembling hand ; then all boldly seized the axe in their turn—of all the bystanders not one refused ; and the sheriff's name was cut about in all directions. Gradually the whole village assembled ; all were encouraged to commit the same symbolical act, and, amid laughter and shouts, every one struck his blow.

The bailiff, being acquainted with what had taken place, wanted to send to Horb for the mounted patrol ; but his wise minister advised against the summons, since it could be of no use. Besides, the cunning Soges thought to himself,

'Well, let them all trespass ; that will yield a whole harvest of summonses, and for each summons one batzen. Go on hitting as hard as you can ; you are hitting into your own flesh, and that means my gain.'

Over a glass of beer at the Eagle, Soges, with a cheerful air, calculated the profits that would come to him from the village disturbance.

And so at last, with the exception of Soges and

the bailiff, there remained no one in the village who had not shared in the offence.

On the Tuesday, at the suggestion of the old bailiff, the council-men themselves went before the magistrates, and made announcement of what they had done. The sheriff stormed and raged in the room—he wished to have the offenders imprisoned at once ; but the Buchmaier stepped boldly forward, and said,

‘ Is that all you can do ? Lock us up ? We will see about that. We have come to oppose you. We freely confess what we have done, and there can be no talk of imprisonment, for the present, at any rate. I am no vagabond. You know where I live. I am the Buchmaier ; that man there is the baker, that other is Hans the smith ; and there is Michel’s Basche. We are all to be found on our own land. We cannot be imprisoned without a sentence ; and even then there is still an appeal open to us, if necessary, to Reutlingen and Stuttgart.’

The sheriff returned to the charge, and summoned the men to be examined next morning at nine o’clock.

This was, at all events, a good thing, as Soges was done out of his carefully counted money. Thus both great and little men often deceive themselves in their calculations.

There was something quite martial next morn-

ing in the appearance of more than a hundred peasants marching through the village with their hand-axes on their arms. They often stopped at a house to call out to some one who was late, who would then, in his hurry, pull on his coat in the street. Many of their jokes and witty speeches were stopped by the sight of the Buchmaier, who was frowning gravely. Not a drop was drunk before going to the magistracy. 'Business first, pleasure afterwards,' was the peasants' motto.

The sheriff, in his dressing-gown, with the long pipe in his mouth, was looking out of the window. When he saw this armed troop coming along he quickly shut the window and ran to the bell; but as he always wore spurs on his boots, he entangled himself in the curtain, and fell full-length on the floor, his long pipe lying like a weapon beside him. However, he quickly sprang up, rang for the beadle sent him to the commandant of the station and to the sergeant of the mounted patrol, and ordered them all to come with loaded guns. Unfortunately there were only four of them now in the village; he commanded them to remain below in the waiting-room, and hold themselves in readiness at any moment. He then gave orders in the hall that the peasants should only come in one at a time, and the door be immediately closed after each. But when the Buchmaier was called in first, he said, holding the door in his hand, 'Good-morning, Mr.

Sheriff ;' and immediately turning round, he said to those standing outside, 'Come in, you other fellows ; we have a common cause ; I shall not speak for myself alone.' Before the Sheriff knew what was happening the whole room was filled by the peasants, wearing their axes on their left arm. The Buchmaier stepped towards the clerk, and, stretching out his hand, said, 'Write down word for word what I say ; the officials of the district are to know it too.' He then twice tugged his collar, pressed his fist on to the green table, and began :

'All due respect to you, Mr. Sheriff ; the king has sent you, and we must obey you as the law desires. The king is a good honourable man ; he certainly does not wish the peasants to be tormented like cattle, or to be managed like children with the rod. The little officials, from the higher to the lower ones, find a pleasure in playing at commanding ; at last I suppose they will write down the notes for the cackle of a hen when she lays an egg. Now I mean for once to take the lid off the pot ; I mean to tell you the truth. I know well enough it is of no use now, but said it must be ; I must out with it ; it has been choking me for a long time. The council is of no account any more ; everything is to be settled in the magistrate's office. Well, then, you had better plough and sow and reap too in the magistrate's office. One of those miserable little clerks can worry a whole town-hall

full of peasants ; and, before one knows what is happening, one clerk after another is made bailiff of the village ; then everything is settled by a regular system of clerks. Truth is truth, order there must be ; but first we must see whether we cannot get on better without the clerks. And then we are not quite idiots ; and even if we cannot use official language, yet we can do something. We must have learned men to keep supervision over everything ; but, first of all, the burghers must bring their affairs into order themselves.'

'Come to the point—to the point!' insisted the Sheriff.

'This is just the point of the matter. With all your clerkship you have at last nothing more to command, and so you begin with avoiding, precaution, and prevention—yes, prevention. I had almost said, at last you would set a policeman in front of every tree, so that it might not come to blows with the wind, or drink too much when it rains. If you go on like this with these little commands we had better ride off on the cow.* Everything, everything you want to take from us. Now here is one thing that we will not have taken from us ;' lifting up his axe, and then continuing as he gnashed his teeth, 'and if I must with this axe break open all the doors till I reach the king, I will

* A proverb, meaning to make use of the last means of flight.

not give it out of my hand. It is our right since ancient times to bear these axes, and if they are to be taken from us, the whole Assembly or the Diet must do it ; and then we have a word to say in the matter too. But why do you want to take them from us ? So that we may commit no trespass in the woods. There are wood-rangers and penalties and laws to provide for that, and they are the same for nobleman and beggar. How many teeth does a poor peasant need to eat potatoes with ? Pull out the rest, so that we may not fall into the temptation of stealing meat. And why do you let the dogs run about with their fangs ? When a boy is eight or nine years old he has his knife in his pocket, and if he cuts his finger with it, it is his own fault ; if he hurts any one else he gets a slap on the finger. Now who tells you that we are worse than little children, and you our teachers and guardians ? You gentlemen do just as if it were your doing that I do not at this moment jump out of the window. In the chief affairs of life every man and every community must take care of itself ; and it is not you who can do it, masters. What do I say ? Masters ! It is our servants that you are, and we are the masters ! You always fancy we are there on your account, so that you can command something. We pay you to keep peace in the country, and not to let ourselves be worried. Servants of the state—that is what

you are ; and we, the burghers, are the state. If we do not get justice we will go no longer to the pump ; we will go to the fountain-head. I would sooner lay my head on the block, and let it be cut off with this axe by the executioner, than allow the axe to be taken from me against my will by any official. That's all. I have done.'

Respectful silence reigned around ; every one looked at his neighbour and winked, as much as to say, 'He has got his deserts ; now he may put that in his pipe and smoke it.' But Basche whispered quite low to the baker, 'There the proverb speaks truth ; he has hit the nail on the head.' 'Yes,' answered the baker, 'he has not put his tongue in his pocket.'

The Sheriff did not let the impression of this speech last long. Twisting a little piece of paper between his fingers, he began, in a quiet voice, to set forth the weight of the crime committed. Many a sharp side-hit was aimed at the Buchmaier, who only shook his head gently, as if he were warding off flies. At last the Sheriff spoke of litigious persons and rebels, of conceited gentlemen peasants, who had once drunk a pint of beer with a lawyer, who had heard the bells ringing, but did not know where. From this general digression he then returned to the matter in hand. He named a few of those present ; praised them as quiet sensible burghers, who would be incapable of such an action ;

expressed his deep conviction that they had let themselves be led astray by the Buchmaier. He implored them, by their conscience, by their obedience to the king and the law, by their love for wife and children, not to take upon themselves such heavy guilt, but rather openly and freely to confess that they had been led astray, and their punishment should be mild.

Once more there was silence. A few of the men looked at one another, and then looked down, perplexed, to the ground ; but the Buchmaier lifted his head up boldly, and looked straight into all their faces. His breast was swelling full of expectation—he held his breath. Mathes had already opened his lips to speak, when John the smith closed his mouth ; for just at that moment the old bailiff, who alone of those present had been seated on a chair, rose, and with heavy footsteps, hardly lifting up his feet, went to the green table. At first he panted and took breath frequently, but presently he continued fluently,

‘ Many thanks, Mr. Sheriff, for the fine epilogue which you have held to me and the others ; but as for what the Buchmaier has said, I will subscribe to every word of it. If another proof had been needed that the masters look upon us as little children not come to years of discretion, you would have provided it, Mr. Sheriff. No ; I am seventy-six years old, and have been bailiff for twenty years.

We are no children to be led astray to do that sort of thing, like a childish prank. The axe shall remain with me until they cut me six boards with it. Whoever stands here as a child must say so. I am a man who knows what he is doing; if it comes to punishment, I am ready for it.'

'We too!' exclaimed all the peasants, with one voice. Mathes' voice sounded above all.

The Buchmaier's face seemed covered with light. He once more seized his axe with his right hand, and pressed it to his heart.

When the customary formalities were ended, the minutes signed, and the Buchmaier had begged a copy, the peasants quietly left the Sheriff's house.

Several other communities protested against the new order. The matter came before the district government. Those who had themselves protested so improperly with their axes were fined a considerable sum. However, some time after Sheriff Rellings was deprived of his office, but the order was not renewed.

Now, as formerly, the men wear their axes on the left arm.

BUSKEN-HUET.

BORN AT THE HAGUE, DEC. 28, 1826; NOW RESIDING IN
PARIS.

BUSKEN-HUET.

THOUGH not the greatest Dutch novelist, Busken-Huet may yet be pronounced representative of national life, for in his pages we meet with realistic pictures of Dutch every-day existence, such as are revealed to us by the paintings of Brouwer, Ostade, Teniers, Jan Steen, De Hooghe, and others. Not that he is the first or the only person who has depicted Dutch home-life. The authoresses Wolff and Deken, in their *Sara Burgerhard* and other works; Jacob van Lennep, in his *Klaasje Zeventer*; E. J. Potgieter, and other novelists, have done so before him. But they depicted Dutch home-life in the past, although it was a past nearer to our own time than that immortalised by the great artists of the seventeenth century. Busken-Huet gives us the life of to-day, such as we should find it in any of those quaint red-brick houses, alongside any of those canals, in any of those wide flat reaches, so familiar to us in paintings.

Busken-Huet was born at the Hague, and educated at its public school. In 1844 he became a

student at the University of Leyden, and passed thence to Switzerland, completing his studies at Geneva and Lausanne. In 1851 he was appointed minister to the Walloon congregation at Haarlem. After holding the post eleven years he felt obliged to resign it, owing to a change of views. For a brief space he still occasionally conducted the services ; but his principles would not suffer him to continue this. He grew restless ; he began to feel that there was not room enough for his talents in Holland. He had obtained employment upon a daily paper ; but in Holland to be a contributor to a daily paper is to work hard, and yet barely gain a livelihood. Busken-Huet was discontented with the general state of public affairs, and he was especially disgusted with his own party. He thought the Liberals at fault, and expressed his views in rather hard terms. Being one of the editors of the Dutch magazine *Gids* ('The Guide'), he published in one number two articles that caused a great stir among a nation generally so tranquil. The one was an attack upon the policy of the Liberal leader Thorbecke ; the other ridiculed the Dutch Court, and above all, the Queen, who was much beloved. The articles sowed discord among the eight editors of the magazine, of whom only one, E. J. Potgieter, a leading author and poet, took Huet's part. Huet, disgusted with the laxity of the Liberals, went over to the enemy, and be-

trayed his party. He accepted the offer of a chief editorship of a daily Conservative paper, published in Batavia, and retreated to that colony. From this post he obtained a splendid remuneration. A few years ago he returned to Europe, and is still writing for this paper, though living in Paris.

Busken-Huet, although he is past fifty, cannot be better characterised than by calling him a boy, and such he will remain till his last breath. He cannot leave off doing mischief, literary mischief, of course. He is just like a street-boy who flings a stone at a passer-by, not because he wishes to hurt him, but because he cannot resist the temptation to play a trick. Huet is the happy possessor of much wit; his power of sarcasm is well developed; he is fully master of his language. But while he plays tricks upon others, his wit, in its turn, often plays tricks upon him. It makes him say things he cannot justify. A *jeu de mots* is something irresistible to him, regardless of the pain it may occasion to the person to whom it is applied. He often commits murder by so doing. Yet he does not mind whom he wounds, whom he kills. Many a time it has been a writer of talent, one in whom he should have recognised his equal. But he must not be judged too severely for all this. His faults are in great part the result of belonging to so small a nation as the Dutch. And, indeed, in several respects, he may be considered a victim. He has been

wronged by his countrymen. Nor is he the only one of whom this is true. Of late years mediocrity has been in the ascendant in Holland. There is no room to be found for superior men. Huet belongs to the superior ones; but others have borne their hard fate more worthily.

Huet is not only, or chiefly, a novelist, though he has produced many novelettes of the kind of which we give a few short specimens. He has also written a novel in two volumes, called *Lidewyde*. There is no lack of beauty in this work, though it is marred by many blemishes. The work proved that Huet could never become a great novelist, and what he has published since confirms this opinion. His most remarkable productions are his essays, especially his *Eerste Fantasiën*. Above all else Huet is an observer, and, as such, we shall behold him in our pages.

Gitje.

If any one had asked us at that time—we speak of our childish, our boyish years—concerning the name and appearance of Brigitta van der Plas, we should have answered, ‘Whom do you mean? We have not the honour of knowing such a lady.’ Had the rejoinder been, ‘What! you do not know Brigitta van der Plas, the seamstress, who was in the service of your parents so many years!’ we should

have replied again with the exclamation, 'Ah, you mean Gitje, our seamstress! Yes, indeed, we know her very well. Give us a pair of scissors and a piece of paper; we will at once make you a likeness of her. But how could we have thought that Brigitta van der Plas was the same person as our Gitje?'

You may be sure we never heard her called anything but Gitje. The future master or mistress begins already as a child to show an aristocratic, no doubt, a well-educated indifference to the fate and the circumstances of the servants. But work-people's children also have aristocratic feelings. We, who were the children of well-to-do people, had never given it a thought, either that Gitje could be the abbreviation of Brigitta, or that our seamstress could allow herself the luxury of a family name. Still you might say van der Plas sounds modest and simple enough.

Three or four times a week Gitje came to practise her trade at our parents' house. One of her regular occupations was to mend our blue-and-white-striped blouses, in whose sleeves we managed to tear such wonderfully large holes. At other times she would iron up-stairs in the nursery, the windows of which looked out on the garden, and in which also stood a mangle and a linen-press. She was a beautiful ironer. When she had put her irons to the fire and all was in order, she would

take the ironing-board from the wall against which it leaned, and put it down in the usual way, *i.e.* like a bridge, with one end resting on the trèstle-table and with the other on the back of a chair. Thus Gitje, standing in the middle, had plenty of room to move her arms and put her things down. The board was swathed in a half-scorched woollen blanket, and reminded us of a thin old woman covered with a flannel vest. There was nothing more amusing than to watch Gitje when she ironed our sister's balldresses. After they had been damped and rolled up sufficiently long, she would take up a dress, and, lifting the ironing-board at one side, slip the frock over it. Then she took one of the irons out of the red-hot iron pot at her left-hand side, held it for a moment very close to her cheek to feel if it was as hot as she wanted, rubbed it lightly on a cloth lying for that purpose at her right hand, and then began her real operations. The balldress, first a limp, draggled, shapeless mass, gained crispness and form with every touch of the iron. My sisters were only half satisfied if they were going to a ball and any one but Gitje ironed their dresses.

Once a month* the scene of Gitje's labours was

* A wash once a month in a Dutch household is called a children's wash. The house-linen and the body-linen of the grown-up people are only sent away to be washed three or four times a year. The above description applies to the

down-stairs in the breakfast-room. This happened when the linen had come home. The family to which we belonged was a very large one, and consequently our washing was also large. Now we purpose to describe the management of a very large one ; large not in the etymological sense, but in the technical. Gitje's help was indispensable. She descended from the less sacred sphere of the nursery, and was closeted with our mother in the breakfast-room, the holy of holies. Nothing was more fascinating than to watch our mother and Gitje stretch the numerous tablecloths and sheets. They did it exceedingly neatly ; ay, not only neatly, but with energy, with enthusiasm. They stood at the head and foot of the large oblong table. The sheets, still unstretched, lay in gradually-diminishing piles on the left-hand side, while those already stretched lay in an ever-increasing heap upon the right. In the middle lay their present victim, several yards long, and pale as death, while they pinched it between their fingers. Their elbows pressed closely to their sides, their right feet forward, the upper part of their body thrown backwards, stood the two women, the mistress and the maid, and stretched, stretched, stretched as fast as they could—types of

present day, with the exception that the mistress does not now generally help in the work, and that instead of the breakfast-room, the linen is dressed in the upper or lower parts of the house.

simplicity and fulfilment of duty, and pictures of Dutch home-life. For us, who looked on passively, but nevertheless with the greatest interest, the question of questions was: will Gitje presently draw our mother over the table? or will our mother be quicker than she and draw Gitje across? Will our mother drop the sheet? or will Gitje open her fingers, and, as a preventive measure proceeding solely from a principle of permissible self-defence, play a trick upon our mother? or will the sheet tear in the middle? Will Gitje keep one end in her hand and our mother the other? and will the sorrowful close of the matter be that Gitje's head will fall against the mantelpiece, while our mother's will recoil against the wainscot, and thus both of them be hurt?

Meanwhile the dexterous women stood immovable, emulating each other in perseverance. The pile on the right grew bigger and bigger, and before dinner-time the heap on the left had disappeared.

With the beginning of autumn came the preserving of greens and fruits. Good gracious! what a number of things were brought into our house with Gitje's assistance! We, who never felt too grand to help for a little while, if required, with the mangling, used also in our childhood, under Gitje's guidance, to string a great many beans, especially the small French beans. Afterwards, when we could be trusted without danger with a knife, we also

helped with the large beans, which, as you know, are so much more difficult to manage. Besides this, we saw Gitje throw numberless white cabbages into a cask, after she had cut them into little bits. Then she pressed them down with a wooden pestle, and, last of all, she covered them with a few heavy stones placed on a board nearly as large as the width of the cask. This is to induce fermentation in the contents of the cask, in contradiction to the Dutch proverb, 'What lies in the cask does not ferment.'

What lies in the cask does not turn sour. So people say ; and it would be ignoble to undermine the hopeful trust in the future embodied in this proverb. Gitje too spoke in this manner as often as she thought of Leendert van Kuyk, and this happened now and then. You ask why? Well, here our narrative takes quite a new turn. He was, and had been for years and days, her lover. . At the time of which we are speaking the silver wedding of their engagement already lay far, far behind them. 'Incredible!' you exclaim. Well, I cannot give you faith. We can assure you, as a well-sifted and well-confirmed fact, that Brigitta van der Plas had been for twenty-seven years the sweetheart of Leendert van Kuyk. And then? Then Leendert van Kuyk died of the cholera at the age of fifty-five.

His profession was making fishing-tackle. We

used to buy angling-rods, fishing-lines, hooks, and floats in great quantities at his little shop ; and sometimes, poor though he was, he would make us a present for Gitje's sake. At that time we really did not know that he led such a poor life. On the contrary, we thought him very well off indeed. Had he not a large stock in his little shop, an enviable abundance of fishing-tools ? Did it not make our mouths water to see his angling-rods, his trammels and drag-nets ; his imitation breeze-flies, dunflies, gadflies, beetles, and other kinds of bait ? We dreamed of nothing more precious or desirable than his worm-boxes, made of painted tin, and intended to be worn slung across the shoulders, as a cavalry officer carries his cartridge-boxes. But, even if we had been acquainted with Leendert's poor circumstances, we should none the less have accepted his presents. Children are not only haughty, but greedy. See how, after the death of a little brother or sister, they immediately confiscate the dead child's toys—dolls with real hair and movable eyes, magic-lanterns, humming-tops—and divide them, wrangling as to ownership. You see at once these are grown-up people in the bud. The wolf-nature is already in them. The first time they will share a real inheritance you will see them attack it with greed, unless they have learnt in the mean time to behave themselves in accordance with the requirements of society.

Leendert and Gitje were not exactly a nice-looking couple, still they were not repulsive. They belonged to those worthy lovable people to whose features one pays no attention after one has spent two days in their company. Goodness and fidelity, the foundations of their character, radiated from both their faces. In the summer holidays, early in the morning, before daybreak, Leendert would take us out fishing ; and then his kindness was boundless. He woke us by ringing the bell, and then waited patiently at the street-door till we were ready ; carried our barrels for us, showed us the places where we should have the best chances, gave us his own paste and worms, and presented us with the greater part of his catch. He fished splendidly. Do not fancy every one can fish if he likes. Angling especially requires much instinct and long practice. The tales Leendert told us of his exploits and good luck—of innumerable three-pounder perches which he had caught one after another in a small ditch ; of eels which he had to split up to their tails to regain his fishing-hook ; of pikes which had swum away with his rod ; of bleeding tenches that cry like new-born babes ; of large eels which he had skinned in the morning, and which bit his finger next evening. We believed them all, as we did the *Arabian Nights*. Two things in special we learnt from him. In the first place, how to put a new hook on the line, and to cover it over

with tin-foil; so that it hung quite straight and did not slope away from the float; an indispensable condition that alone makes it possible for the angler to know surely if, and in what measure, the fish has bitten. In the second place, we brought from the school of Gitje's faithful lover this lesson: when the fish has really bitten, and the angler is ready to strike, he should always do so by pushing it, and not by pulling. In the latter case, when the little fish has not bitten well, it swims away backwards with your bait in its mouth, and grants you at most a bloody piece of its gill. In the former case, you oblige the creature to tumble, and by so doing you insert with deadly force the angle through the horny substance of the open lips.

Of Gitje's appearance in her spring-time, when she was twenty-three years of age, and plighted her troth to her Leendert, he himself could have told you more than we are able to do, had not the great angler, Death, taken him away. At the time of which we are speaking, all womanly beauty had fled from her. She was then between forty and fifty, very tall, looking delicate and weak, suffering much from catarrhs and rheumatism, and carrying always a silver snuff-box (containing coarse snuff and a tonga-bean) about her. Now that we have grown older and wiser, we do not think these peculiarities at all ridiculous. On the contrary, we feel that we have a right to make Leendert's betrothed who was

fifty-five years old, and who carried a tonga-bean in her pocket, the heroine of a novelette. While yet a child, and having never pondered the rudiments of our art, we laughed at Gitje's tediously long engagement and her old-maidish complaints. For children are not only haughty and greedy—they are also cruel. They like to laugh at the misfortunes they do not understand. We did not, however, commit this cruelty. But this was not from amiability of disposition, but because the true relations between Leendert and our seamstress were not known to us till the funeral of the former, and because we had never even wondered why this man treated us with such marked kindness.

The first information of Leendert's death, and of his long courtship of Gitje, did not make us laugh, you may be sure; but still it did not make that impression which the sad event deserved. This proves that, had we been sooner informed, we should undoubtedly have made many jokes about Gitje and her lover. We heard the news from our mother, in answer to our question why, on a certain morning, Gitje had not come.

'What is the reason Gitje has not come to-day?'

'Leendert is dead, and is at this moment being buried.'

Saturday Evening on the Kleine Groenmarkt at
the Hague.*

On Saturdays in the beginning and at the end of summer, especially between nine and ten in the evening, there was to be seen at the Kleine Groenmarkt a scene as bright and varied as it is possible to imagine. It is a picture of van Schenkel that has gained life and reality. It is clear moonlight. The rows of houses cast deep large shadows. Art has produced light where Nature has either refused it or dispensed it too scantily. Here burn magic lamps surrounded by large piles of greens and fruit ; there sparkles a candle, incased in an oiled-paper globe, from the wheelbarrow of that son of Israel. Yonder, out of the opened shambles, glows the mysterious red light of torches. At the sheds, piled up with greens, sit women, silent and very busy, anxious to sell off their wares. Behind the wheelbarrows stand Jews and Jewesses, bawling loudly, praising their goods with fiery ardour now that they have ended their Sabbath celebrations. In and out of the shambles hurry relays of maid-servants carrying marketing-baskets on their left arms, and front-door keys on their right thumbs. This spot is specially dear to them. Here they meet their fellow-servants from the other end of the town. Here the artilleryman or dragoon of their choice is waiting, and they

* Small green-market.

can exchange a few sweet words of love. There is a buzz of many voices, for the concourse is large. The bustle distracts your brain. You are in the midst of the weekly carnival of the Hague citizens.

Albert and Pietje are walking arm-in-arm, whispering confidentially. Behind them, as near as the crowd permits, skulks Samuel. He looks at them incessantly. When they advance, he advances ; when they stop, he follows their example. The couple enjoy the liberty they have allowed themselves. Everything that lengthens the walk is welcome to them. Every incident is a reason for lingering longer. Now it is the quack, who stands in front of the town-hall upon a raised stage, and whose impudent gabble detains them. He is recommending in high-flown terms a male walnut, *i.e.* a worm-eaten nutmeg, and asserts that its possession is 'to you, O women, your purse ; to you, O men, the pocket of your trousers ; for it will keep from your dear bodies all manner of illness and disease !' Now they halt at the shambles ; now they stop near the stony little island, consisting of half-a-dozen trees planted in a circle, where a man is giving a vociferous explanation of a coarse daub of a picture. I will explain it to you.

On this island, between the trees, fixed upon a pole, hangs a large picture. It is no Rembrandt. Properly speaking, it is twelve pictures or more, painted upon one canvas. This material bond is

not the only one by which the parts are united. There is also a unity of subject, for it depicts a horrid murder, committed by two country lads, in a village inn, upon the host and his wife. The youth of the murderers and their early development in wickedness is represented at the top of the picture in the left-hand corner. Picture number one is an apple-tree, in whose branches sit two boys stealing its fruits, while at the foot stands an indignant schoolmaster, long-coated, bald-headed, shaking his fist at the culprits. Number fourteen, at the bottom of the right-hand corner, shows a square of bayonets, borne by about fifty invisible soldiers. They are standing upon guard round a scaffold on which the former apple-thieves are to be hanged by the neck until they be dead. Pictures two to thirteen tell the whole sad psychological development, to defraud, to drink, to steal, to drink yet again, to commit burglary, to murder, to fall into the hands of the police, to be judged, to deny, to confess, to scold Wÿntje, to accuse Trÿntje,* to be spoken to earnestly by the Lord Chief Justice, and to end as on number fourteen. A man and a woman, proprietors or showmen of the instructive painting, do all they can to point out its beauties of thought and execution. The man is armed with

* The Dutch use the expression Wÿntje and Trÿntje to explain that the crime is founded on the abuse of spirits, and the companionship of women of ill-fame.

a long bamboo-cane, with which he points out the different periods of the story without looking up at the picture, and yet without making a mistake. He explains the events in blank verse, relieved by rhymed and pithy refrains. The woman, who joins in the refrain, accompanies it to the sounds of a barrel-organ. The weight of this instrument, which she carries round her neck by means of a leathern strap, presses her thin shoulders together. Before her, on the lid, are a wailing child of some fifteen months, and a tin box to hold the pennies. The man has retained a look of well-being. It may be that the great lump of tobacco that he holds in his mouth, and which has swelled out his cheek, makes his face look better nourished, and that he would certainly not think himself a well-fed man. The woman looks far more decrepit than he. Her shrill voice, which even sounds above the organ, reveals the great exhaustion that is expressed by the whole appearance of her body. But why do I trouble about the looks of these grown-up people? If their way of getting their living is despicable, the results scanty, it is certain that neither he nor she can carry on a more honourable means of livelihood, and that they do not deserve a better piece of bread. Let them see to it themselves, how they finish their days, and how they justify their doings.

But what crime has that pale thin child com-

mitted that it should be condemned to spend its earliest life coughing on the lid of a street-organ? Probably he is the successor to half-a-dozen male and female predecessors, who have been borne one after another on this throne—a throne as shaky as many another. Perhaps the four elder ones are training for rope-dancers, while the two younger are exercising themselves in imitating. But, perhaps, we are only letting our fancy work. Does it matter, you think, if these brothers and sisters exist only in our imagination? Is it of great consequence whether there are many or only this one? Here anyway is a child, a human being, miserable and wretched, suffering for the laziness and carelessness of its father and its mother; a sick child that is starving bodily and mentally, although it has done nothing to deserve this fate. That is the great point; and that is quite enough. The observer who has an open eye for the comical side of things must also have an open heart for their misery. Amidst your pleasant meditations you here touch a painful enigma.

Along the Churchyard.

Every one has his own ideal. She would, of course, not have been yours. I speak of Gerritje, the fisherman's daughter, when she was between twenty and twenty-one years of age. Not that she

was not at that time a good-looking woman, of neat and tidy appearance the whole year round. By no means. Perhaps she might even be called the rose of the villagers. In any case it is certain that he who saw her on Sunday morning sauntering to church, accompanied by her father and mother, or met her on Sunday evening walking with half a dozen friends along the seashore, would declare that rarely had he seen two fresher dimpled cheeks, two whiter rows of teeth, and two better shaped feet, incased in white-lined green slippers and the cleanest of stockings.

But let us mention only her Sunday suit, and leave alone her work-a-day clothes—more rags than clothes. She wore a stiff-stretched cap of coarse net, tastelessly embroidered; two long golden earrings, hanging down along the cheeks, and fastened on the top to a lock of false hair; a gaudy red-and-yellow-flowered cotton jacket; a huge apron of a blue-and-violet lace, tied on at the back between the shoulder-blades, where the collar of the jacket is plaited together in the form of a rosette; an ugly red-coral necklace, fastened with a lock, not much smaller than three inches square; nothing of all this resembles in the least degree what Dante loved in Beatrice; Rousseau, in Juliet; Werther, in Lotte; or Lamartine, in Elvire.

And then, could Gerritje write? She understood better how to drive into town with her dog-

cart full of shell-fish. Could she read? It was much easier to her to carry a chest of drawers or a kitchen-stove upon her head from the town to the village. Could she play the piano? No; but when her father was ill she could go with her cart to the shore, and harness and unharness the stout horse very deftly. Had she a nice voice? If she repeated a joke at 'Halfweg' you could hear her laugh at the town-gate. Would it be likely that a young man would beg for a kiss? It might be; but a glance at her fleshy hands made even the most audacious male flirt instinctively seize hold of his ears as though they tingled already from a blow.

Arie's cheek had never glowed from such a box on the ears. But neither was he a flirt, though he had begged Gerritje for a kiss, and even for more than one. He was no dandy from the town, but a courageous fisherman, sprung from fisher-blood; a giant outwardly, inwardly a child; blameless, open-hearted, and not rough. He was no fop from the town; he courted with the intention to marry, and Gerritje accepted him, though he was many years older than she. With regard to their natures, they were made for each other. Her independence, her rather too independent mind, bent willingly to the authority of Arie's love; and where he had too much of gravity and earnestness, she balanced it by her easy temper. Humanly speaking—for it came about just otherwise—she could better have missed

him than he her. She was his sunshine, his life, his all. At every separation, for however brief a space, he felt himself abandoned and lonely. The invisible world existed for him only in the shape of Gerritje's name ; faith, hope, love, were all called by him Gerritje. Too clever for a fisherman—but so he was.

We described Gerritje : fresh and stern and joyful, and also tender, but for him alone. Such she was, and as such he loved her dearly as his sweetheart and his wife for ten long years. The number is exact ; for just at the beginning of May 1855, in honour of their ten years' wedding-day, he had presented her with a cake ; and next June, by the birth of their fourth child, she was taken away by death within a few moments.

Their eldest child, a boy of between seven and eight, was like milk and blood ; the second and third, also boys, had died in their cradles ; the fourth, a mortal stab to the mother, was a girl. The midwife said, 'A healthy child that will certainly sustain all dangers.' It sustained every danger, and became, according to the neighbours, as fat as a little mole, thanks to bread-and-milk and bread-porridge.

The loss of his wife was for Arie a blow that quite struck him down. In the twilight, the day before her funeral, he was sitting opposite the fireplace, next to the open coffin, feeling little faith

and no hope. He lifted up his head out of his hands that were wet with tears, and looked out straight before him. Thus there came within his view the last present he had made to Gerritje, the same cake which recalled the remembrance of their tenth wedding-day, and which Gerritje, with housewifely care, had put upon the mantelpiece for show. 'A trifle, but given by a loving heart,' was the inscription, deciphered with difficulty by Arie. Without knowing how it came about, these words riveted his attention. They no longer expressed what they had meant originally—Arie's love for his wife. Their meaning enlarged; he looked upon them with another eye; he transferred them to another dominion; he connected them with thoughts on the leader of his destiny. Overcome by an inclination to murmur, he thought them half true, half untrue, but a more untruthful than truthful description of his present state. 'A trifle?' he said, in a questioning tone. 'Yes, indeed a trifle; for what have I had? Not even my copper wedding-feast! What remains to me? Exceedingly little. To work all day and all night until I look worn and black, and when I leave my boat not even to find a kind face to gaze upon. I am now left to myself with two little children. The boy matters less, he will make his way. But what shall I do with the baby? Little, terribly little—and does it come from a loving heart?' He rose and paced up and

down the little room. As long as prosperity endured he had believed and prayed, or rather said grace more often than prayers, and both more mechanically than from a desire to do so. Now that Gerritje was dead—Gerritje dead!—his whole soul, with all the strength that was in him, revolted against the idea that the fate of men could be directed by One with a loving heart. Impossible; it could not be true! If so, why was Gerritje not left where she was and where she could not be spared? Why take away the wife from the husband, the mother from the boy, the nurse from the babe? Once more he put the question, ‘From a loving heart, from a loving heart?’ and while he lighted the lamp and returned to the coffin once more to devour Gerritje’s corpse with his eyes, he muttered sadly between his clenched teeth, ‘A remarkable fellow who is able to believe that!’

Yes, Arie, a remarkable fellow, and at the same time a good one; a better and wiser one than you are at present. Best part of your error must be laid at the door of the old spinster Kasper. She, who was very orthodox, had scarcely heard of Gerritje’s death when she rushed to Arie to inquire concerning her last moments, and whether she had died as a good Christian.

Arie was angered. She grew so too, and spoke to him of death and perdition. Her hard words, joined to the darkness and emptiness in his heart

occasioned by Gerritje's death, had disgusted Arie with every consolation offered by religion. The tall strong man could not forget the white-sugar letters written on the upper part of the sixpenny cake. Although eloquent enough to refute the spinster Kasper, he could find no words as often as the evil spirit residing in his own heart began to speak and to incite him. Other people he could silence, but not himself. This happens frequently to a great many, to nearly all of us. For, you see, to preach and to practise are two quite different things.

STIFTER.

BORN IN OBERPLAN, BOHEMIA, OCT. 23, 1806 ; DIED
IN LINZ, AUSTRIA, JAN. 28, 1868.

STIFTER.

IN Adalbert Stifter, Austrian literature possesses a true poet and an artist who painted the most exquisite cabinet pictures in words. He was a son of the people, had passed his childhood out of doors, and drew his inspirations from actual contact with Nature. His father was a linenweaver, who owned a few cows, which his boy tended. He early showed a love for fairy tales and marionette plays; and the village schoolmaster, recognising his abilities, advised his father to give him a good education. This advice would have been followed had the father lived, but a terrible accident killed him when Adalbert was but ten years of age. An uncle, however, adopted him, and sent him to the Latin school attached to the monastery of Kremsmünster. Here he began to write verses and show a talent for landscape-painting. In 1826 he was removed to a school at Vienna, where he studied history, philosophy, and natural science, and in his leisure hours painted landscapes. When he had passed through the classes it became needful he should do something for his maintenance: he turned to teaching; and

this brought him into contact with many families, among whom he soon made friends. His pupils were chiefly of noble rank: among them was Prince Richard Metternich, afterwards well known as ambassador at Paris. To him, as to others, he taught mathematics and physics, in which sciences he excelled. His leisure moments were divided between writing and painting, but he did not thrust either of these favourite occupations into notice. Accident, however, revealed to the Baroness von Münck, the mother of one of his pupils, that her tutor was a gifted writer. She drew attention to his talent, and procured for him an opening on the Vienna papers, in which he forthwith published some of his short tales. They found favour at once, and he was able soon after to collect them in book-form, under the title of *Studien* ('Sketches').

At the time that Stifter first wrote, Austria possessed no novelists; her literature was altogether at a low ebb. Political oppressions had much to do with this; it was so easy to offend against Metternich's stifling restrictions. The severe and suspicious censorship scented contraband in even the most innocent productions. There was no encouragement to write, every encouragement to keep silent. Such authors as could not be repressed had to publish their works out of the country. Stifter's writings, however, could not offend the most narrow-minded autocrat.

Stifter was happy in naming his stories 'Sketches,' for they are artists' memoranda rather than rounded works of art. Here a favourite bit is drawn with detailed care, there one of less interest is lightly touched in. His writings all bear the character of landscape-painting; they are pictures of still-life, in which scenery plays the chief part, and man a subordinate figure. There is not much action in his stories, which are told in a calm narrative tone, that never grows dramatic even in dramatic situations. His heroes are the woods, the wide-stretching moorlands, the Austrian alps, the sombre Bohemian forests with their still tarns, the Moldau with its rocky banks and ruined castles. These had been graven in on his boyish mind, and these early impressions recur in his writings. His native country was his Muse. Naturalist, artist, and poet in one, his wonderful knowledge of Nature was employed with artistic perception and appreciation. Every little trait was familiar to him; hence every touch is true, detailed to the smallest minutiae. His descriptions are never tedious, for they are filled with an animated sincere delight in Nature which is infectious. It is not a cold observer, it is a lover, that describes. While exact to nature, he never lapses into a scientific tone; the poet hovers over all, and gilds all hard angles, all crude realities. Neither in avoiding this danger does Stifter fall into the opposite one. The anthro-

pomorphic conceptions that pervade too many of our modern delineations of Nature are absent with him. He does not attribute to her a soul or psychological motives ; he puts nothing into her that is not there. She is real, true, tangible, objective, healthy in his pages ; his objectivity is quite classical in character, and recalls the *Bucolics* of Virgil in their happy simplicity of wording.

Stifter did not wholly confine himself to his own age. *Der Hochwald*, of which the scene is laid in the Austro-Bohemian mountains, deals with the Thirty-Years War. In *Witiko* he attempted to write an historical novel. This was a mistake ; such a form of writing did not suit his style or mode of handling. The *Nachsommer* was a novel in three volumes, the longest work from his pen. It tells of an attempt to create an earthly paradise in the midst of roses, lakes, and alps, far removed from the distracting haunts of men, where only harmonious and agreeable surroundings shall prevail, and all the ugly details of life are to be banished from sight and knowledge. The attempt succeeds apparently, and it would appear that Stifter did not doubt its feasibility ; but the effort is too perceptible to the reader. An atmosphere of forced quietism, a calm but deadening air, fills this Utopia, which is an Austrian country version of some of our modern pre-Raphaelite experiments.

Stifter is not at his best in this novel. His style,

into some of the mannerisms that characterize his other works. It is in his six volumes of *Novellen* that we get him at his best ; and Stifter's style is very good indeed. His masterly language is simple, noble, clear ; never rhetorical, never unbecomingly effusive, always chastened and subdued in tone.

Stifter's life was as quiet as his writings. He was married, and was happy in his home. In 1846 the Government appointed him school-inspector at Linz, a post he filled till weak health forced him to retire in 1865. From that time till his death, in 1868, he lived a retired existence, devoted to scientific and literary work, to painting and horticulture. In him Austria lost one of the most notable representatives of her literature, a master of prose, a lover of all things good and beautiful.

The Balloon Ascent.

In order to avoid the presence of any uncalled-for spectators, the ascent took place at early dawn. The beautiful girl stood by looking on with suppressed excitement while the balloon was being filled. She could scarcely control her beating heart, and the foreboding expectation of the things that were to come. For such bystanders as there were, it was an anxious moment when the insignificant-looking silk swelled into a gigantic ball, and tight-

ened the mighty cords with which to earth. Curious instruments and were fastened into the compartments of fine tall man—usually he was gentle, cheerful, good-humoured, but to-day pale and grave. He went round the machine several times, and tested its soundness at various points. At length he asked the girl whether she persisted in her desire ; and on her answering ‘ Yes,’ he gave her a strange look of admiration, and helped her deferentially into the car, remarking, that he would not weary her by a repetition of the warnings which he had given her a fortnight before, since she had doubtless well considered them. He waited a few moments, and as no answer came, he also got in. An old man was the last to enter ; she took him to be some gray-headed scientific assistant.

Now every one was ready, and the machine prepared. Cornelia cast one more glance towards the trees of the garden that stood around masked in the morning mist, and looked on. Then, from the lips of her companions, sounded the cry : ‘ Now, in God’s name, let the good Condor fly—loosen the ropes !’ It was done ; the thousand invisible arms of the air seized and propelled the gigantic ball ; it trembled, staggered, tottered for a moment, then gently rising, it loosened the little car from the motherly lap of earth, and, gaining speed with every breath, it shot at last with an arrow’s swift-

ness right up into the morning stream of light. In a moment the flames of the morning sun darted on to the ball and among the ropes. Cornelia was startled, and thought the whole balloon was on fire; for the lines of the ropes stood out like glowing rods against the indigo-blue heavens, and its dome shone like a gigantic sun. The retreating earth was still quite black and indistinguishable, fading away into darkness. Far in the west, on a bank of mist, lay the fading moon. Thus they soared, higher and higher, gaining a wider and wider vista. Two hearts—and, perhaps, the third old one too—were beating high at the grandeur of the moment. The rolls of sublimity were beginning to be unfurled, and the conception of space began to tell with all its power. The sailors were just rising towards a whole archipelago of clouds, which, at that very moment, were scattering their morning roses upon the earth; but up here were only white gleaming icy lands, swimming in the terribly blue brooks of the air, and cleft by abysses and cracks that yawned towards the ship. And as they came nearer, the icy lands stirred and moved as white wavy mists. At that instant the sun rose over the earth, and this earth became once more visible in the distance. It still wore the accustomed motherly aspect, such as we behold it from lofty mountain peaks, only that it was blushing sweetly under its network of morning sunbeams.

‘How far, Coloman?’ asked the aeronaut.

‘Almost the height of Mont Blanc,’ replied the old man; ‘rather over 14,000 feet, my lord.’

‘It is well.’

At these words Cornelia peeped cautiously over the edge of the car, and bent her looks straight down through the airy abyss on to the dear earth left behind, now glimmering with light, to see whether she could discover any known spot. But, behold, all was strange, the familiar habitable aspect was already gone, and with it the little links that bind us to some loved spot which we call home. Like great shadows the woods stretched out towards the horizon, a wonderful structure of mountains spread far and wide like crowding waves, inclining towards bare spots that were probably plains. Only a stream was distinctly visible, a thin trembling silver thread, such as is often seen on a dark heath in late autumn. A strange yellow light seemed to float over the whole.

When she withdrew her eyes from below, she met Lord Richard’s calm glance, which reassured her. He was adjusting a telescope, and was setting it firm.

The balloon travelled westward, borne along by a gentle current of air without rising. For the last twenty minutes the mercury in the tube had fallen no further. The two men were occupied with their instruments; Cornelia pressed her wraps

more tightly about her, and shrank into the corner of her seat. The flowing air played round her curls, and the vessel rocked gently.

The silence was broken by the monotonous utterances of the men, as the one dictated while the other wrote. Once upon the horizon there appeared in the nebulous distance immense shimmering snowfields, which Cornelia could not comprehend.

‘It is the Mediterranean, dear madam,’ said Coloman ; ‘and we only want to pump a few more samples of air into the compartments, and to test the electricity up here, and then you shall see the surface look still more beautiful—no longer silver, but of pure sparkling gold.’

Meantime the young aeronaut had filled a vial with strong coffee, and placed it in unslaked lime, on which he poured water, and thus warmed the fluid. He then added a little rum, and handed the young girl a glass of this hot and heating drink. In the intense cold she felt the beneficent effect instantly flowing like new life through her nerves. The men drank also. Then they whispered together, and the younger nodded. Hereupon the elder began to empty sacks of sand, which stood in the car, out over its sides. The Condor swayed in its air-bath, and with its namesake’s mighty wings it swung itself, slowly and solemnly, into the highest ether. Here the scene underwent a sudden and overwhelming change.

Cornelia's first glance was once more down to earth ; but it was no longer the well-known home. It seemed to be reeling backwards, gleaming in a strange golden vapour ; bearing on its forehead the Mediterranean, like a narrow shining band of gold ; it swam along over unknown fantastic masses. The startled girl turned away her eyes as though she had seen a monster ; but about their boat too whirled far around thin white shrouds, which when seen from the earth are the fleecy clouds of heaven. Up to this heaven she now turned her gaze wistfully ; but, lo, it was no longer there ! The whole vault of heaven, the beautiful blue bell over our earth, had become a black abyss of measureless limitless depth. That gladness which we enjoy so thoughtlessly below, the full flood of light upon our beautiful earth, had completely vanished up here. As if in mockery, the stars became visible—tiny impotent golden specks, scattered at random through the solitude ; and the sun too—a threatening star, without warmth, without rays, a sharply-outlined disk of wavy swollen metal, smelted to a white heat. Thus it glared forth from the abyss with destructive lustre, and yet without retaining a breath of light in these empty regions. Only on to the balloon and car shone a glaring light that marked off the machine in a spectral manner from the surrounding night, and gave a deathly hue to the faces of its

occupants, as though they were seen in a magic-lantern.

And yet, though fancy could scarcely grasp it, it was our own dear gentle air in which they were sailing, the same air that to-morrow will fan the infant's cheeks. As the old man remarked, the balloon was entering the upper trade-wind, and must be moving along with terrible speed, as was proved by the very slanting position of the ship, and by the powerful pulling and tugging at the silk, which, in spite of all, gave forth no louder sounds than a child's whining ; for the domain of sound was at an end too up here ; and when the ship turned away from the sun there was nothing, nothing but the dreadful stars, looking like ghosts that walk by day.

Now, after a long silence, two lips, pale as snow, opened and spoke in low frightened tones, ' I am giddy.'

But they did not hear her. She wrapped her furs more tightly round her to keep off the cold that was shaking her with ague-like force. The men were still working at things she did not understand ; only the young, handsome, appalling man seemed to her now and anon to turn his majestic gaze towards the magnificent darkness, and play, poet-like, with danger and grandeur. Not one sign of emotion was perceptible in the old man.

After a long, long time of oblivion, the younger man at length bent his face towards the girl to see

how she was. She was staring around her with calm senseless eyes, and on her lips stood drops of blood.

‘Coloman,’ he cried, as loudly as he could up here, ‘Coloman, we must descend ; the lady is very unwell.’

The old man rose from his instruments and looked towards her. It was a look full of wrath, and his countenance was deeply indignant. With a voice of startling strength he exclaimed,

‘I told you so, Richard ; woman cannot endure the heavens. The undertaking that has cost so much is now incomplete. Such a splendid journey ! The easiest and calmest of my whole life is lost for nothing. We must descend, it is true, otherwise the girl will die. Open the valves !’

After these words he sat down again, seized a rope, and drew together the folds of his cloak. The younger man gave a sharp tug to a green silken cord ; and, like a giant falcon, the Condor plunged down a hundred fathoms through the air, and then sank slowly more and more.

The lord held the fainting Cornelia in his arms.

The Heath.

In the real sense of the word, it is not a heath to which I want to lead my dear reader and listener, but a sad, lovely little spot of country far

from our town, which is called the Heath, because from time immemorial nothing but short grass has grown upon it, with here and there a stem of heath-fir or dwarf-birch, on which occasionally hangs a lock of wool, torn from one of the few sheep and goats who now and then wander about. Besides these there was a plentiful sprinkling of juniper-bushes, but no other ornament, unless we count as such the distant mountains, which formed a beautiful blue band round the dimly-coloured landscape.

But as it often happens that melancholy persons, in whose hearts Nature has implanted wondrous poetry and strange feelings, seek out and love just such spots because they can there give full vent to their dreams and their inner music, so it was the case too with this heath. Thus a black-eyed boy of ten or twelve years very often came here with his sheep and goats, nominally to tend them; but when the animals separated, the sheep to pluck the short aromatic grass, the goats (for whom in truth there was no suitable food) to follow their own reflections and enjoy the fresh air, while every now and then plucking at a soft sprig, he would begin to make acquaintance with all the various creatures that the heath bred, and enter into an alliance and friendship with them.

There was a slight eminence on the heath, on which the gray stone, another part owner of the

tract, was found in larger quantities. It pushed itself out to view, and even formed an overhanging mass, with a place of shelter and an orator's tribune. The juniper, too, crowded more closely at this spot, spreading out into many-branched kindred, and near it grew many a pretty flowering thistle. But just here there were no trees far and wide, on which account the view was more beautiful than at other points, especially towards the south, where the distant marsh, so unhealthy for its inhabitants, so beautiful to the beholder, floated in a blue mist out into all the grades of distance. The spot was called the Horse Mountain ; why, none knew, since within the memory of man no horse had ever been here ; indeed it would have been far too expensive a luxury for the heath.

It was to this spot that our little friend liked best to stray, even if his charges had wandered far away on their various business. He knew from experience that not one of them would leave the party, and he always brought them together at last, however far he might have to seek for them. Indeed the actual search was an adventure to him, especially when he had to wander far and wide. On the eminence of the Horse Mount he established his kingdom. Beneath the overhanging block he gradually formed a seat, by building or scooping with sharp stones. At first it was only large enough for one, but at last it grew roomy enough

for three. A few shelves were discovered or made in other convenient nooks and crannies, where he placed his leathern heath-pouch, his bread, and the countless heath-treasures which he collected and brought up here. There was society in plenty. In the first place, there were the many great blocks of stone that formed his castle, all well known, and named by him, each of a different colour and aspect ; not to mention the countless little ones, which were often even more varied and brightly coloured. He divided the large ones according as they delighted him by their oddity or annoyed him by their vulgarity ; he loved all the little ones. Then there was the juniper, an obstinate fellow, of invincibly tough limbs when he was to let go a beautiful sweet-scented shepherd's crook, or make room for a road to be constructed. His branches were thick-set with thorns ; nevertheless they were all covered with gifts of honour, which he presented all the year round to the numerous heath-guests, in the shape of a million millions of blue and green berries. Then there were the wondrous heath-flowers, burning fire-coloured or sky-blue, between the sunny grass of the stones, and those countless little blossoms sprouting among the juniper, which open a little white beak and show a little yellow tongue. Many a strawberry, too, might be found ; also some raspberry-bushes ; and there actually grew between the stones a long hazel-rod. Nor was

bad company wanting either, which he knew from his father to be such even when it was beautiful. For instance, here and there, but rarely, grew the herb Paris, which he only spared because it was of such shining blackness, as black as nothing else on the whole heath, except his own eyes, which, it is true, he could not see.

We ought scarcely to speak now of the living and moving company ; there is so much without them. But this is the most excellent company. I will not mention the thousand upon thousand golden, ruby, and emerald creatures and worms which climb, run, and work about on stone, grass, and stalk, because of gold, ruby, and emeralds he knew nothing yet but what the sky and the heath displayed to him. But of other creatures I must speak. There were his favourites, the creaking purple-winged grasshoppers, who flew up in dozens before him when he traversed his domains ; there were his countless cousins, the greater and lesser locusts, Heyducs clad in dull-green garbs, chirping and dancing merrily and ceaselessly, so that on sunny days there was a quivering sing-song along the whole length of the heath. Then there were the snails, with and without houses, brown and striped, rounded and flat ; and they drew silvery paths along the grass or over his felt hat, on which he liked to place them. Then there were the flies—humming, buzzing, fizzing—blue, green, or glass-

winged ; the humble-bee, that hissed sleepily past ; and the butterflies, especially one tiny one with sky-blue wings, silver-gray beneath, marked with such pretty little eye-like spots. Then there was another still smaller kind, with wings of pure sunset red. Finally, there were the birds which sang in many places : the yellow-hammer, the robin-redbreast, the wood-lark, that often filled the whole heavens with church music ; the greenfinch also, the hedge-sparrow, the plover, and many more. All their nests lay in his domain, and were sought out and guarded. Many a small field-mouse would he watch slipping along, and spared it when it suddenly stood still and looked up at him with its little, shining, frightened eyes. Of wolves and other dangerous depredators not one had been heard of from time immemorial under all his ancestors, with the exception of egg-sucking weasels, with which he waged war to the knife.

In the midst of all these delights he stood, walked, or sprang, or sat, a splendid child of the heath. From his dark-brown little face, full of goodness and sense, shone out in flashing unconscious brightness his coal-black eyes, loving and bold, betraying that dangerous element which had been granted to him, and was beginning to sprout in the solitude of the heath—a dark fiery fantasy. Around his forehead a wilderness of dark-brown hair was artlessly abandoned to the

winds of the plain. If it were permitted to me, I would compare my little favourite with that shepherd lad in Holy Writ, who also found his heart, his God, and his dreams of future kingly greatness upon the heath of Bethlehem. But I do not think that shepherd lad could have been quite as poor as our little friend, who had nothing the whole day long but a good-sized piece of black bread, with which, strangely enough, he managed to nourish his blooming body and still more blooming soul. He had, besides, some clear cool water that gushed forth hard by the Horse Mount, filled a little well, and then hastened swiftly along the heath to join its sisters, and, united to them, hurried towards that distant marsh of which we have spoken. In good times he had a goat-cheese or two in his pouch. But one source of nourishment he had in plenty, which the wealthiest town-dweller cannot command—a whole ocean of the most wholesome air around him, and a fulness of light to ripen colour and health above him. In the evening, when he came home, his mother would cook him a dish of milk-soup or good millet-broth. His dress was made of half-bleached linen. He further possessed a broad felt hat, which, however, he seldom wore, and generally hung up in his castle on a wooden peg that he had knocked into a crack in the rock.

Nevertheless he was always joyous, and sometimes could hardly contain himself for mirth. From

his regal throne he ruled over the heath. Sometimes he wandered over it far and wide ; sometimes he sat up aloft on the stone block or orator's tribune, and as far as the eye could see, so far did his fantasy roam ; further still sometimes, till it spanned the whole distance with a network of thoughts and imagination. And the longer he sat, the more thickly his fancies crowded, so that at last he was often himself entangled helplessly in their web. He knew no fear of solitude ; and it was just when far and wide not a human being could be seen, and only the hot midday air trembled over the heath, that the whole array of his inmost fancies came trooping forth and peopled the heath. He would then often stand on the stone block and hold a sermon and speech, and below stood the kings and judges, and the people and the generals, and children and children's children, countless like the sand on the seashore. He exhorted them to penitence and conversion, and all hung upon his words. He described to them the promised land, declared that they would accomplish heroic deeds, and at last longed for nothing so much as that he too might perform a miracle. Then he descended, and led them forth to the most distant and remote portions of the heath, which were about a quarter of an hour's walk, showed to them the whole land of their fathers, and occupied it at the point of the sword. Then it was divided among

the tribes, and each was bidden defend his own land.

Or sometimes he built Babylon—a terrible town of wide extent. He built it of the little stones of the Horse Mount, and announced to the locusts and beetles that a mighty kingdom was rising here which no one would be able to conquer, save Cyrus, who would come to-morrow or the next day to punish the godless king Belshazzar, as Daniel had long since prophesied.

Or he turned the course of the Jordan, that is, the brook that flowed from the spring, and forced it into another channel. Or he did none of these things, but went to sleep on the open plain and let a bright-coloured carpet of dreams be woven above him. The sun looked down on him, and enticed rose-colour out of his cheeks as he slept, as beautiful and as healthy as on mellow apples, or as ripe and as strong as on full-fruited hazel-nuts; and when at length it had drawn out of his forehead great clear drops, then it took pity on the boy, and waked him with a hot kiss.

Thus he lived many a day and many a year upon the heath, and grew taller and stronger; and into his heart came deeper and darker and quieter powers. He became full of sadness and longing, and he knew not how it was with him. He had completed his education—what the heath could give him it had given. His rich intellect now pined

for its bread of knowledge, and the heart for its wine of love. His eye roamed over the distant exhalations of the marsh, and yet farther, as though out there must be something that he lacked, and as though some day he must gird his loins, take up his staff, and wander far, far away from his flock.

The meadows, the flowers, the field with its corn, the wood with its innocent little insects are the first and natural playmates and masters of the youthful heart. You need but abandon the little angel to his own inner god and keep the demons away, and he will educate and prepare himself in wondrous wise. Then, when the fruitful heart begins to hunger for knowledge and feeling, then open out to him the greatness of the world, of men, of God.

And herewith let us take leave of the boy on the heath.

FARINA.

BORN IN SARDINIA, JAN. 10, 1846 ; NOW LIVING IN
MILAN.

FARINA.

ITALY, the land of imagination *par excellence*, has not, up to the present, been distinguished for her novelists. Political conditions have probably had much to do with this. Italy lacked the elements from which spring works of fiction. With the awakening of her national self-consciousness arose a school of novelists. They were headed by Manzoni, the Scott of Italy, who chose for his themes historical events. His successors took the French as their models, and transplanted into Italian soil the romantic atmosphere of contemporary France. Their aim has been to arouse high-souled and patriotic sentiments ; and they succeeded in their noble mission. The younger school who have arisen after these are also romanticists ; but they are so in the modern, more sober, and subdued acceptation of the term. They have besides enjoyed the immeasurable advantage of finding the political groundwork ready made for them. Like their forerunners, they too have wisely copied the French in the matter of form ; and hence these Italian novels of the day are distinguished by a

conciseness very remarkable in so talkative a nation. Bersezio is the Nestor of this school: he stands half-way between it and Manzoni. Then follow Turchetti, Barrili, Verga, and Farina—the latter the youngest, most popular, and most original of them all. A native of the north whence the new power of Italy has sprung, Farina is likely to continue its reputation as a regenerator of its fatherland. Farina is an Italian of the best type, and both he and his works are very characteristically national. A faculty for enjoying life, an optimistic temperament, a capability of taking things easily and yet not frivolously, a natural inclination to look at their best side, a rich faith in the ultimate triumph of good, distinguish his writings. A religious and political freethinker in the best sense of these terms, Farina is no revolutionist; he does not expect changes to come suddenly and without due intermediate stages. He can be patient and wait—not sleepily, but observantly. He has studied modern science and philosophy; he is well read and well cultured. All this is reflected in his works, as yet few in number, small in bulk, but full of achievement as well as promise.

Farina was born at Sorso, a small place in Sardinia. When he was thirteen, his father left the island to fill a legal post at Casale Monferrato. When the young Farina had ended his school-studies, he went to Paris and Turin to study law,

and in 1868 took his degree. Immediately after he married. Strongly attracted to literature, he forthwith abandoned all idea of a legal career, and settled at Milan, as the intellectual centre of Northern Italy. Soon after he issued his first novelettes.

Due Amori, Frutti Proibiti, Romanzo di un Vedovo, are the fruits of Farina's first style—a style he soon happily abandoned for more original and worthy themes. In these first attempts he betrayed the influences of the French Bohemian school, besides a tendency to Manzoni's highly-coloured style. *Tesoro di Donnina* marked a decided advance. It is evident that the real author spoke here, while previously he had been little more than a copyist. In this novel Farina first strikes the note that so honourably distinguishes him—the encomium of pure family life, the high ethical standard that never defeats its purpose by assuming a didactic garb. It was followed by *Fante di Picche, Amor bendato, Un Tiranno di Bagni di Mare*—all written in a suave and charming style. These again were followed by *Della Spuma del Mare*—a novel of artist-life—and *Ora Nascosto*—scenes from the every-day existence of the middle class. These are at present his longest works. He contemplates writing two long romances; but, with a wisdom as excellent as it is rare, he has waited until the 'prentice hand' should no longer be visible in

manner or matter. 'Prima che Nascesse,' 'Le tre Nutrici,' and 'Mio Figlio Studia' are three sketches that have just been followed up by two more—'Corraggio e Avanti' and 'Mio Figlio s'innamora'—the whole, when completed, to form a cycle of novelettes—a prose poem of family life—under the collective title of *Mio Figlio*. How needful it is to recall to Italians the healthful influences that emanate from the household-hearth only those who know Italian life can rightly estimate; and it is a matter for rejoicing that one of her best contemporary writers should choose such sane and honest themes. He is occasionally more outspoken than is customary in English novels, but this is a national *naïveté* that springs from no reprehensible source; rather the contrary; it is an innocent child-like outspokenness that thinks and means no harm.

Though Farina's writings at first reading, when tried by the standard of English novels, may seem but slight, they are yet thoroughly representative of Italian life and modes of thought. Graceful and delicately humorous, they show sympathy for human sufferings without falling into an over-pathetic strain. An Italian feels, but he does not torture himself; he is light-hearted; he reflects the sunny golden sky above his head; he is somewhat careless even in his conduct of life; he wisely lives *au jour le jour*; he lets to-morrow take care of itself. Farina's Muse is an amiable one. Endowed with

good observation of human nature, and witty, he skims the surface lightly and easily. He can be ironical too ; but his irony is not scathing. There are no sensations, no startling adventures or complications in his dramas ; indeed, they err from want of invention, and are scarcely original in plot, though they are in treatment. Every-day life is the material with which he rears his edifices ; the home, the family, his domain. Marriage and love are holy to him ; no French frivolity disfigures his pages. Moreover he has both tact and taste. In his descriptions of scenery, in his power of giving soul to Nature and animals, he is excellent ; his delineations of life in the country are idyls, amid which, however, move real, and not Arcadian, men and women. Not the least of Farina's charms is his style ; and this is the very charm that evaporates in translation. It is on this account that his *Amor bendato* reads rapidly in English, the two tongues being so far from cognate in mode of thought and expression. Farina's language is musical and suave, full of playful amenity ; a subtle aroma pervades it that tells of a people among whom a sensuous perception of beauty and form has been at home for centuries.

Farina, who is in the prime of life, lives at Milan, where he edits a musical and literary newspaper with taste and discrimination. His works have found great favour among his German neighbours,

by whom they are translated as soon as they appear. Dutch and French versions also exist. Farina has thus already acquired a European fame.

The little *genre* picture of Italian life which we translate has been pronounced, by no less an authority than Signor de Gubernatis, as one of Farina's most characteristic productions. It is certainly one of those that best lends itself for transformation into another mode of thought and speech.

Separation.

I.

My room in the *Via Bagutta* was really situated a little higher than was necessary. I said so to myself once a day, I had so often to climb the one hundred and twelve stairs that separated me from the world below ; but whenever I reached the top, and gazed through the window over the splendid panorama of roofs and chimneys, I so much enjoyed the view that I remained living there. Four months later I had made the acquaintance of all my neighbours ; and among a bachelor's neighbours there are sure to be some from whom it is better to keep aloof.

Thus I made the acquaintance of the most eccentric married couple that can be imagined. If I were to say that Signor Sulpicio and Signora.

Concetta were each the actual half corresponding to the other, the statement need hardly be metaphorically taken ; for, in truth, both of them together owned only as much flesh and muscle as usually belong to one ordinary mortal. If their years were added together, their sum was considerably over that of a century and a half. And if I imagined to myself—a funny, but not improper notion—Signora Concetta standing on her husband's head, it seemed to me as if the worthy lady would just touch, or, perhaps, even project, a very little beyond the ceiling ; and my room was only three and a half metres high.

After the establishment of these mathematical proportions, it will be easy for the reader to form a picture of this couple ; and they will live in his memory as in mine, a pair of lank haggard thin forms, gray-headed, their faces furrowed with wrinkles, and their eyes sunk and sparkling.

For fifty-five years they had shared bed and board and all the vicissitudes of life with one another ; they had so grown into one another, and had so lived themselves one into another, even their faces, with the exception of their noses, had grown so like one another, that they might easily have been taken for brother and sister. But those noses, those noses ! They had obstinately retained their own original shape ; and I must confess that never in my life did I see two more differently

shaped noses. The man's was hooked—eagle-fashion—as though inquisitively to watch whatever entered the mouth ; while the woman's was small and retreating, as though it stepped aside to leave the way to her mouth open for a good morsel. This simile was not made by me in the first instance, but had its origin with the couple.

It happened at dinner fifty-four years and eleven months ago, in an unfortunate moment of mutual anger about some sauce that tasted of smoke.

This was the first cloud that appeared on the fair sky of their conjugal happiness ; but it was an ugly dark cloud, and it mounted from the sauce into their noses, from their noses into their heads, from their heads into their minds. At last they discovered that never on this earth had a married pair more unwillingly borne the burden of the conjugal yoke than they. Concetta spoke of returning to her relatives, and Sulpicio wished her to go at once ; but considering that they were on their wedding journey, and that Concetta's relatives lived two hundred miles away from the scene of this first matrimonial quarrel, the execution of this plan was, for the time being, deferred.

But 'separation' was, and remained, the password between them. Next day it occurred to Sulpicio that his companion had been intrusted to him as a maiden treasure ; he remembered a touching conversation which he had had with his father-in-

law ; he bethought him of his vow 'to make her happy ;' a whole host of good thoughts and wise resolves rose up in his soul, and at length brought him to the conviction that it was his place to persuade Concetta not to forsake the domestic hearth.

Concetta too, on the whole a sensible woman, thought of her mother's advice ; of the 'yes' she had pronounced before the altar ; of the envy of her friends who remained unmarried ; of the secret joy and pretended pity of her youthful companions. Then she considered that Sulpicio was not really a bad man, and that it was only the unfortunate smoky sauce that was at fault in the whole matter.

When Sulpicio approached her with his pleasantest smile, Concetta also met him with her pleasantest manner ; they pressed each other's hands, embraced warmly, and peace was concluded.

But in their hearts there remained the consciousness that they had made trial of one another. This trial was followed by others no less stormy ; and the fourth story in the *Via Bagutta*, and sometimes the whole neighbourhood, were occasionally witnesses to sudden shrieking sounds.

'That is Concetta,' the people would say. It was Concetta. After the unfortunate victim had vainly cast at her tyrant's head all the flattering terms she had collected during the last fifty-five years, without being able to trump his supply, she would finish by giving a terrible scream. At the

end of such scenes old Sulpicio generally fled downstairs, so that Concetta sent her last abusive words after him from one of the steps.

Then the good neighbours came to her assistance. They let her talk till the attack of rage was over; then they joined in her lamentation, and pitied her, and declared her fate to be undeserved, and her husband a brute. Suddenly she seemed quieted, and then she contradicted every one most passionately, and defended her Sulpicio with incredible warmth, whom she alone could understand, whose heart only she could read, and who was really better than any one else.

When the attack was over, and the landing cleared again, the old woman crept quietly and secretly back into their apartment, and buried her trembling head in a large black-silk hood; thereupon she descended two flights of stairs, and knocked at the door of Madame Nina, who lived with a weak-headed uncle, a friend of Sulpicio's. Concetta knew that her husband thought very highly of the young woman; yet she was so far from being jealous of her, that she even made use of her assistance in reëstablishing peace.

Almost at the same moment the husband returned secretly to the house, came panting up the stairs, and burst into my room. As he knew that Concetta cherished almost motherly feelings towards me, and that a word from me would go a long way

with her, he did me the troublesome honour of intrusting me with the restoration of his domestic peace.

II.

From me this office of peacemaker required no great sacrifice, nor from Nina either, I believe.

As soon as Concetta saw me, she met me cordially, seized my hand in both hers, and by mutely nodding her head and casting up her eyes, she declared to me all her sorrow for what had occurred, her intention of returning to her conjugal duties, and her gratitude for my successful efforts. It was evident that neither could Concetta live without her Sulpicio, nor Sulpicio without his Concetta. They loved each other, as they had always loved each other; and in spite of being ever ready to quarrel, they loved as much as any two people can love.

As I had expected, as soon as Sulpicio appeared at the door after his conversion, hiding his emotion from me by assumed indifference, Concetta would have given him any atonement in her power, and in her confusion she sought through all her pockets for her thimble and needlecase.

Meantime I occupied myself with the lock of the door, or looked out of the window, or examined some book or picture. Then the two came a little nearer to one another; my backward glances re-

vealed two trembling hands that pressed one another, two faces sparkling with glad smiles, and two tears rolling down along the furrows of the wrinkles. At last they fell into each other's arms. I then looked elsewhere, or I turned round as if accidentally and said that it was beautiful weather—unless it happened to be pouring with rain; but I thought to myself that in those tears youth had come back to life, and that these smiles were well worthy the rosy cheeks and foreheads of spring.

But one day the storm raged so terribly that the diplomatic transactions lasted many hours, and had to be very skilfully managed before the two ships could be got to run into the calm matrimonial harbour. The word 'Separation' was pronounced by both parties with the greatest decision, and neither would give way.

In order to avoid any diplomatic transactions, both parties had left the house and gone in opposite directions. The servant, a half-silly little thing, whom the two old people had turned up somewhere and taken in, knew nothing except that her master and mistress had gone out one after another. I seated myself by the grate, stirred the fire, and awaited the events that might come. It was a beautiful winter's day, the sun shone brightly and the fire crackled merrily on the hearth.

My thoughts too were cheerful. I tried to guess which of the two would be the first to return

to the domestic hearth. Who? Doubtless Concetta. Suddenly I heard a dress rustling! I rose, turned round, and saw before me—Signora Nina, the young widow from the third story.

The lady seemed surprised to find me. She was the more embarrassed as she had entered with her usual easy familiarity; and to avoid the appearance of having committed an indiscretion, she acted as though she had not observed my presence, and thus made me understand that in so entering she had only made use of an old privilege. All the more I felt it to be my place to salute and address her; but she anticipated me.

‘Is Signora Concetta not at home?’ she asked.

‘Neither she nor Signor Sulpicio. I am waiting for both.’

‘And I wanted to speak to one of them. I will come again.’

The information that both husband and wife had left the house seemed to make her anxious; still she remained.

‘I really meant to wait, but I will come again.’

‘Thank you. Probably you come for—’

‘For the same reason.’

With these words I stepped a little aside, as though to invite her to remain. The next minute she was seated at my former place, near the fire, and I—did not go.

Signora Nina did not know me, but I knew her

well. From my window, which was over hers, I had often examined the colour of her hair, and vainly hoped some time to be able to behold that of her eyes. Once I had sent her away by coughing ; since then I had never coughed at the window. Now those little white hands, that I had once seen playing the scales, were resting on the mantelpiece, and I might openly look into that face which had hitherto been to me a veiled picture.

Yes, Nina was beautiful, at least she seemed so to me.

As I was still standing before her, she invited me, by a polite movement of her hand, to seat myself. I did so. One moment of silent expectation followed. No one came.

The silence began to become uncomfortable. She broke it by speaking of Sulpicio. I spoke of Concetta.

When I told her of the office whose duties I had faithfully fulfilled ever since I had the good fortune to be the neighbour of this couple, she smiled. What a beautiful smile ! What splendid teeth !

‘What a misfortune !’ said she, after a short pause. ‘To live with one another fifty-five years without being able to understand each other !’

‘An eternal fight and squabble ! I have been a witness to it. But in reality they are fond of one another.’

The widow's face showed a curious smile, but she did not answer.

'Such contradictions are like contrary winds,' continued I, 'which stir up wave after wave, and toss them up to the sky ; then, when the storm is over, the sea becomes calm again, and once more shows the smooth surface of its clear waters. I scarcely think that two people could live with one another for any length of time without quarrelling.'

Still the widow did not answer. She shook her head, and stirred impatiently among the ashes in the grate.

I was silent.

'What time is it?' asked she, as though she thought her silence offended me.

'Four o'clock.'

'It is late. I must go. I will come again.'

'By the right time, it is still thirteen minutes to four.'

Nina smiled, and did—not go.

I did not know why, but in my heart there was a sound as of joy-bells.

Suddenly we saw Sulpicio and Concetta coming along hand-in-hand.

'Is peace restored?' both Nina and I inquired with our eyes.

'It is,' answered husband and wife, in the same language.

‘I had come to offer my congratulations on the peace,’ said the widow. ‘Now it is late, and I must go.’

Concetta was in good spirits; her wrinkles revealed a kindly smile, and her eyes sparkled.

‘It was not a bad thing that Signor Carlo kept you company,’ said she to the young widow.

Nina blushed, and I felt my heart beat faster.

She went, and soon after I took my leave.

The whole day long I only thought of Signora Nina, and only dreamt of her all night. All next morning I stood at the window to see her. I was fortunate enough to be observed by her, and to be allowed to bow to her. For a whole month I stood regularly at the window at the same time, and rejoiced in the same good fortune; now I smiled at her, now she at me. Seven months and eight days after I was permitted to press Signora Nina to my heart. She was no longer a widow.

III.

We were happy. We inhabited a little house far removed from the noisy bustle of the town. Our windows did not open on to the dwellings of troublesome neighbours. We had the sun every day from morning to noon, and our new furniture shone in festive light.

She said her old uncle would on no consideration remain alone with his infirmities, and had gone to live with a sister in the town.

We were alone with our dreams, our plans, and thoughts ; and that was sufficient for us. Any other society would only have been wearisome.

Our room was rose-coloured, like the happy spirits that presided over it. The future appeared to us as a beautiful dream. Nina was as graceful as she was dignified. She could smile so sweetly ; her glance was as bright and as clear as the moon's beam ; her voice was gentle and harmonious ; and then she had such a bewitching way of approaching me, laying her hands on my shoulders, and, without one spoken word, saying to me, ' I love you ! ' that I could have gazed on her for hours, and devoured her with my eyes.

She had only one fault : she could not go from one room into another without banging the door behind her. Often, when I was startled from my thoughts and dreams by the slamming of a door, I was on the point of giving expression to the unpleasant sensation ; but then I saw her rosy face, and was silent. None the less did it constantly irritate me, and I tried in vain to endure it more calmly.

I must testify to myself that I was an almost perfect husband to Nina. I left her alone as seldom as possible, and then only for a short time. I never contradicted her. I tried to anticipate all her wishes, always spoke kindly to her, and committed a thousand little absurdities to keep her in good

humour. But I, too, had one little fault : I was terribly absent. Sometimes, when I was absorbed in some stupid thought, I did not notice that she, herself smiling, demanded a smile from me ; and then I would answer some joking fancy by a serious shake of my head.

Certainly Fate, when it mated together two such serious faults, could not have intended to produce an image of conjugal peace.

One day I was even more absent, and she slammed the doors even more violently than usual ; a loud ' O ! ' escaped from me. She had heard it and I repented it. In vain. Next time Nina did not disturb me in my contemplation ; she walked softly on tiptoe, and when she closed the door, she did it with the greatest care, to avoid making the least sound.

The roar of Vulcan's smithy would not have made me spring up faster from my chair. I rushed towards her, embraced and kissed her, and we laughed together in the fulness of our hearts.

But the ice was broken ; a thought had come to open expression between us : we were not perfect. In spite of all her exertions, Nina did not succeed in curing herself of her fault ; only as soon as she had committed it she assumed a half sorry, half teasing manner, which made her seem even more beautiful.

As for me, as often as my thoughts carried me

away, I continued to shake my head and open my eyes wide ; and so everything remained as before.

Our honeymoon lasted several months without the faintest shadow of a cloud resting on the brows of the lovers.

One day—it was one of those sultry July days on which the cruel hot sun mocks us—she swears to this day that she first said to me, ‘I should like to know in what you are always so deeply absorbed. I really should like to know!’ And would you believe it, honoured reader, I am said first to have offended her by a slight imprecation, which I did not notice myself until it was more than half out of my lips? Yet, however that may be, one of us replied with a rude speech, the other with a somewhat ruder one, then now and then was added a touch of scorn and bitterness ; and at last Nina’s eyes were as full of tears as my heart of wounded pride.

Another time, the same beginning, the same end ; and that was repeated again and again.

‘This life is becoming unendurable,’ said she.

‘So I think too,’ answered I.

‘Indeed ! Do you think so too ? But I for my part am thoroughly tired of it. And we have borne these chains now for nearly a year !’

‘Ten months,’ I answered.

‘To you it may seem ten years, to me it does

not yet seem quite so long. But I suppose our happiness has already lasted too long! O, how unhappy I am! I can see it already; you will come to hate me, if indeed you do not hate me already. But I, too, shall at last hate you.'

I longed to take her in my arms, and to carry her with her wrath through all the rooms, until at last she should laughingly exclaim, 'Now it is enough.' Best of all, I should have liked to kneel before her, to confess my conjugal sins, and beg for absolution, or to fall upon her neck and kiss it until it was so red with my embraces that fright would have brought her back to her senses; in short, all the good thoughts that can only occur to the best sort of husband rose up in me. I give her a side-long glance; she sees my look, and shrugs her shoulders. I make a step towards her, she leaves the room, and I—do the same; but in the opposite direction, down the stairs, deeply hurt, yet full of conscience-pricks before even I began to carry out my terrible plans of vengeance.

For a long time I continued walking round and round in a circle. I could not leave the spot, and involuntarily my looks always rested on the house in which dwelt my happiness.

Then all at once I remembered Concetta and Sulpicio, our good friends of former times; and I thought that I had no one to undertake the office of peacemaker with Nina for me, and besides that

I would never intrust such an office to any one, or ever permit it.

I said to myself, 'It is the first time ; but who knows whether it is the last time? You must return to her, shorten her punishment as much as possible ; you must speak kindly to her, and say that we will not quarrel any more. But what if she, instead of listening kindly to me, should prove refractory? O, what nonsense! She will certainly answer my first kind word with a hearty kiss. Then we shall no longer talk or complain, but only laugh together.'

Two or three times these conversations had brought me as far as the threshold of my house, and just as often I had gone away again. At length I ventured to cross the Rubicon, ran quickly through the doorway, sprang up the stairs, three or four steps at a time, and a moment after I stood before her, who had already come weeping to meet me on the landing.

She covered her face with her hands, and did not speak a word. I put my arm round her and drew her into the room ; then I took her on my lap, gently forced her hands away from her eyes, laid my face next hers, and begged her forgiveness. But instead of forgiving me she broke out into fresh sobs, threw her arms round my neck, and laid her head on my shoulder. My heart was beating violently. Nina's behaviour seemed to me to tell of

some misfortune. What could have happened during my absence? New caresses in kiss and word. When at length I ventured to address her with an anxious inquiry, she burst out afresh into more violent sobs.

‘She is dead!’

‘Who?’

‘Concetta, poor Concetta!’

I was silent. To tell the truth, the matter did not affect me very deeply; the worthy lady was a good deal past seventy, and her place in heaven had long been reserved for her. Still I felt it my duty to pay some regard to Nina’s sincere distress. When she had finished crying she said, in a voice of deep emotion,

‘Now they are separated!’

‘And who brought you the news?’

‘A friend who visited me. Poor Concetta died quite suddenly the day before yesterday.’

‘And Sulpicio?’

‘Is in despair. He does not speak a word, and seems quite stunned.’

‘I must go and see him.’

‘Yes, do, my friend; go at once.’

I went. When I arrived— Alas, the poor old heart had not been able to endure the grief of desolation! In that same night, a few hours after they had carried out his life’s companion, he lay

down in his widowed bed in the certain conviction that he should not see the next morning.

The dead man's smiling face seemed to say to me, 'Even death has not been able to separate us.'

With my heart full of sadness, but of mild beneficent sadness, I returned home. We were alone. I said not a word to Nina. She fell sadly round my neck and pressed me to her heart.

'Carlo !'

'Nina !'

She cast up her eyes, as though she wished to read my thoughts in mine ; then she whispered,

'We too ! Is it not true ?'

DAUDET.

BORN IN NISMES, MAY 13, 1840 ; NOW LIVING IN
PARIS.

DAUDET.

ALPHONSE DAUDET, a follower of the French realistic school founded by Gustave Flaubert, may be pronounced the most readable, as well as the most moral of this coterie. Possessing a poetical nature, he has not been able to sink into the depths of systematic offensiveness that have engulfed the talents of a Zola. Indeed it is probable that, but for current Parisian influences, Daudet might never have become a realist. Born in Provence, under a blue and sunny sky, where life is gay and hearts are merry, his earliest and most spontaneous productions reflect these influences. They are Provençal in spirit, fantastic and poetical in form and treatment.

Daudet came to Paris as a mere lad of seventeen, with a view to devote himself to literature, rich in hopes, poor in pence. He brought with him some poems, which had the good fortune to find favour in the eyes of the Empress; and, thanks to her intercession, he became secretary to the Duc de Morny, whom, with doubtful good taste, he has held up to public opprobrium in his *Nabob*, under the transparent pseudonym

of the Duc de Mora. His duties appear to have been of the most nominal kind ; they allowed him plenty of time for writing and for travelling. From 1859 to 1861 the *Figaro* published a series of novelettes from his pen. In 1862 the Odéon brought out a little one-act play, *La Dernière Idole*, which met with some success. This was followed by dramas that failed, and it was evident that the stage was not Daudet's province. In 1865 he lost his patron, and forthwith consecrated himself entirely to literature. He wrote novelettes in various papers, meeting with much applause ; he went on to produce longer works, among which *Lettres de mon Moulin*, full of genial appreciation of Nature, and a most delicate work of light French satire and wit, *Tartarin de Tarascon*, are the most notable. In these the Provençale, the poet, are still uppermost.

The publication of *Le Petit Chose* marks the transition from Daudet's earlier to his later manner. Daudet here first turned to the observation and delineation of real life. The book, though painful, and in a sense realistic, rests on an idealistic foundation ; the hero is of a poetical nature, for whom the hard corners of life are smoothed by less dreamy characters. He has his troubles too, and they are no mean ones, but the solution is reconciliatory and happy. *Le Petit Chose* is one of the freshest and most charming of Daudet's works,

even though in artistic construction it is by no means perfect. The same want of finished plastic modelling—a fault rare with the French, whose eminent merit it is that they never overlook the power and charm of form—is equally evident in *Jack*. This novel, which saw the light in 1873, was a pronounced success, and established the reputation of its author. It was followed by *Fromont jeune et Risler aîné*, a work that was crowned by the French Academy. It is a book of the most inexorable realism, full of vivid descriptions of Parisian bourgeois life, and sharp contrast of vice and virtue. Its theme is one too well worn in French novels, but the treatment and situations are new. The accomplice of the wife's crime is, in this case, the husband's partner, and the bankruptcy that her extravagances all but draw down upon the firm involves both her husband and her lover in ruin. The characters are drawn with masterly force: Risler, the good, confiding, unsuspecting husband; the gay, thoughtless, pleasure-loving George; the vain heartless Sidonie. The minor characters are somewhat caricatured in their peculiarities. It is this, and the fact that he treats of bourgeois life, that has led to comparisons between Daudet and Dickens. Daudet may have studied Dickens, but the resemblance, if any, is of the most superficial character. While Dickens looks at life with a philanthropic eye, while his irony is kindly

and humorous, Daudet's glance is scathing, his irony cold and deadly; vice triumphs in his pages, and virtue perishes or succumbs. The *Nabob* accentuated these faults, and introduced a new element into Daudet's works, the vulgar one of personalities. In the *Nabob* Parisian notabilities are held up to scorn under the flimsiest disguise; and though the book has passages of great power, in which the author is seen at his best, this element vitiates the whole. This fault, without the merits of the former work, is still more conspicuous in Daudet's latest production, *Les Rois en Exil*, a dull romance in which figure the Khedive of Egypt, Queen Isabella of Spain, and other deposed monarchs. It is much to be hoped that this, Daudet's latest manner may not prove permanent, for he is capable of better things. His bold, nervous, excellent style is too good to employ it on flippancy and gossip. He is said to compose slowly, elaborating with care, and making no less than three copies of all that he writes. This care is not lost; every word tells, is in its place.

Perhaps of Daudet's two masterpieces, *Jack* and *Fromont jeune et Risler aîné*, the former is the more masterly. The story is cruelly sad. Daudet, in his dedication to Gustave Flaubert, well calls it, 'This book of pity, wrath, and irony.' It is the life-story of a boy who suffers for the sins of his mother: father he has never known. Ida loves

her child in her foolish way, but she loves her loose life more, and the boy is sacrificed. After enduring miseries at a fifth-rate school, the delicate sensitive boy is placed by his mother's lover in the iron foundry of Indret, where he suffers mental and bodily tortures. He then journeys round the world for three years as stoker upon a steamer, where his physical and mental misery culminates. By a vigorous effort he frees himself, and returns to Paris to find that his mother and her lover have squandered a legacy that was really his. For a brief moment love and a happier life seem to dawn for him, but this too eludes him. He dies in the Parisian Charité, not twenty in years, but old in suffering. His end is deeply touching ; but the causes that ultimately lead to it so false and overstrained that they offend against æsthetic requirements, and almost fatally weaken the effect of the whole.

The most powerful scenes in *Jack* and in *Fromont jeune et Risler aîné* are those in which the author introduces us to the homes of the Parisian and Indret proletariat, and paints the life of its workmen, with all their virtues and blemishes. He makes them neither unduly good nor bad ; he paints them as they are, never shrinking from bitter truths. His wonderful power of creating personages, his lifelike pictures, have full swing in these pages. Characteristics are depicted with the mi-

nutest detail, yet with a singular paucity of words. A studied self-restraint is observable in his longest descriptions. The scene chosen by us to represent him is extracted from Jack's residence in the factory, and is a most vigorous piece of writing. The din of the machinery, the hot oily smell of the factory, seem to pervade its very pages. Unfortunately much of this power and concentration is inevitably lost by reproduction in another tongue; yet, even so, it reveals Daudet's master-hand.

Indret.

The singer stood upright in the boat in which the child and he were descending the Loire, a little above Paimbœuf, and, overlooking the river, exclaimed with an emphatic gesture,

‘ See there, my boy ! is not that beautiful ? ’

In spite of what there was grotesque and forced in this theatrical admiration, it was justified by the beautiful landscape that opened out before their eyes.

It was four o'clock in the evening. A July sun, a sun of melted silver, poured on to the waves the long luminous line of its rays. It caused a trembling reverberation in the air, like a mist of light, in which the life of the river, active, silent, appeared with the swiftness of a mirage. Tall sails seen through it, shining white in the dazzling beams, seemed to fly along in the distance. They

were large vessels coming from Noirmoutiers, loaded to the brim with white salt, sparkling with thousands of golden spangles. The boats were manned by a picturesque crew—men with the large three-cornered hats of the Breton salters, women whose full fluttering headdresses were as white as the salt. Then there were the coasters, like floating drays, their decks piled with sacks of corn and casks; men towing endless lines of barges, or some Nantes three-master, coming from the other end of the world, returning home after two years' absence, and ascending the river with a slow, almost solemn, movement, as though it bore with it the silent remembrance of the fatherland found again, and the mysterious poetry of things come from afar. In spite of the July heat, a good breeze blew through all this fair display; for the wind coming from the open sea, with all its freshness and buoyancy, gave the feeling that a little further, beyond those close waves, already being abandoned by the calm and tranquillity of sweet water, extended the limitless green ocean, with its billows, its spray, its tempests.

'But where is Indret?' asked Jack.

'There; that island in front of us.'

In the silver mist that enveloped the island, Jack could indistinctly see rows of tall poplars and lofty chimneys, from which ascended thick black smoke, spreading out and darkening the sky above

it. At the same time he heard an echoing din, blows of hammers on iron, on metal plates, some noises rumbling, others more distinct, variously reverberated by the resonance of the water, and above all a continuous roar, unceasing, as if the island had been a huge steamer, held back and muttering, driving its paddles at anchor, and simulating movement without motion.

As the boat approached slowly, very slowly, because the river was rough and difficult to cross, the child began to distinguish long buildings, with low roofs, blackened walls, extending on all sides in uniform dulness ; then, on the banks of the river, as far as the eye could see, rows of enormous boilers painted with red lead, whose bright redness produced a fantastic effect. Government transports, steamboats, grouped near the quay, stood waiting while the boilers were being embarked by the help of an enormous crane standing close by, which, from a distance, resembled a gigantic gallows.

At the foot of this gallows stood a man, watching the boat arrive.

‘It is Roudic,’ said the singer, shouting a formidable hurrah in the deepest of his bass tones, which was heard above all the roar of the hammering.

‘Is it you, brother?’

‘Sacrebleu! ’tis I. Are there two other notes like mine under the vault of heaven?’

The boat stopped. The two brothers rushed

into one another's arms, and gave each other a tremendous salute.

'And how are all your people?' asked Labas-sindre.

'All well, thank God. Ah, ah, here is our new apprentice. He is a pretty fellow; only he does not look strong.'

'As strong as an ox, my dear, and guaranteed by the first doctors in Paris.'

'Well, so much the better, for our trade is a rough one. And now, if you like, we will go and see the director.'

They went through a long alley of beautiful trees, which soon changed into a street of a little town bordered by white houses, very clean, and all alike. In these live some of the labourers of the factory, the masters, and the chief workmen. The others lodge on the opposite bank, by Montagne, or in Basse Indr e.

At this hour there was silence everywhere, for life and movement were all centred in the factory; and, but for the linen drying at the windows, the pots of flowers arranged behind the panes, an infant's cry, and the sound of a cradle rocking, heard through some half-open door, the whole place would have seemed uninhabited.

'Ah, the flag is down,' said the singer, as they reached the door of the workshops. 'Ah, that cursed flag, what frights it has given me!'

And he explained to his friend Jack that, five minutes after the arrival of the labourers for their work, the flag at the entrance was lowered on its staff, announcing that the doors of the factory were closed. So much the worse for the laggards ; they were marked down as absent, and, after the third time of absence, dismissed.

While he was giving these explanations, his brother was conversing with the porter, and they were allowed to penetrate into the establishment. There was a terrific hubbub ; roaring, hissing, grinding, varying without lessening, answering each other from a number of large rooms with triangular roofs, situated at regular distances on a piece of sloping ground furrowed with numerous railways.

It was an iron city.

Footsteps resounded on the metal plates laid into the floor. The way lay amid piles of wrought-iron, pigs of cast-iron, ingots of copper ; between rows of old cannons, brought there to be melted down, rusty outside, inside black and as though still smoking, old masters of fire about to perish by fire.

As they passed on, Roudic pointed out the various departments of the establishment.

‘ This is the fitting-up room—the workshops of the big lathe—small lathe—the brazier’s shop—the smithy—the foundry.’

He was obliged to shout, so overwhelming was the noise.

Jack, bewildered, looked on in astonishment. The workroom doors were almost all open on account of the heat ; and through them he saw a confusion of lifted arms, of blackened heads, of machines moving, as in the deep dull shadows of a cave, lighted by fits with a red glare.

Puffs of heat, smells of coal, of burnt clay, of melting iron, came out to them with black dust, impalpable, sharp, burning ; retaining, even in the sunlight, a metallic glitter—that sparkle of the coal which might become a diamond. But what gave to all this great labour its quick, hurried, breathless character was the perpetual perturbation of sun and air, a continuous trepidation, something like the efforts of an enormous animal imprisoned under the factory, whose cries and burning breath these gaping chimneys sent far around. For fear of appearing too ignorant, Jack durst not ask the meaning of that tremendous din, which had already impressed him at a distance.

Suddenly they came to an ancient castle, dating from the time of the League, dark, flanked by large towers, whose bricks, blackened by the smoke from the factory, had lost their primitive brightness.

‘ Here we are at the director’s.’ They passed under the low doorway, and penetrated among the old buildings—a group of little irregular rooms,

badly lighted, where some clerks sat writing without lifting their heads. In the last room a man with a severe and cold look was seated at a desk in the light of a high window.

‘Ah, it is you, Father Roudic!’

‘Yes, sir, I come to introduce to you the new apprentice.’

‘So this is the little prodigy. Good-day, my boy. It seems we have a real vocation for mechanics. That’s a good thing.’

Then, after looking more carefully at the boy,

‘How is this, Roudic? He does not look strong, this little fellow. Is he ill?’

‘No, sir; on the contrary, I am told he is surprisingly strong.’

The director rose immediately, to cut short the conversation.

‘Take your apprentice along with you, Father Roudic, and try to turn him out a good workman. I have no fear about your share in the matter.’

Talking as they went, the two brothers and Jack descended the iron streets of the factory, filled at this hour, for the day’s work was just over, by a crowd of men of all sizes, all trades—a medley of blouses, loose jackets, mingling the overcoat of the draughtsmen with the tunic of the overseers.

Jack was struck by the serious air with which this deliverance from labour was conducted. He contrasted this picture with the cries, the jostling

on the pavement, which at Paris mark the departure from work, as noisy as the dismissal of boys from school. Here were felt rule and discipline, as on board one of the government ships.

A hot vapour was wafted over all these people, a vapour that the sea-breeze had not yet dissipated, and which hung like a heavy cloud over the stillness of this beautiful July evening. The silent rooms were letting their odours of the forge escape. The steam gushed forth in streamlets, perspiration was running down all foreheads, and the gasping breath that Jack had heard before now gave place to the breath recovered by the lungs of those two thousand men, exhausted by the efforts of the day.

Evening fell upon the confusion of this dispersed ant-heap. The sun was sinking, the wind became fresher, and shook the poplars as if they had been palms ; and it was a great sight to see even the laborious island entering into repose, restored to Nature for a night. As the smoke disappeared, masses of verdure appeared between the workshops. One could hear the tide beating against the shore ; and the swallows, skimming the water with little cries, whirled amongst the lines of great cauldrons ranged on the quay.

Roudic's house was the first in a long row of like buildings, ranged barrack fashion in a wide street at the back of the castle.

Behind the shallow house the cloth was laid in

a little garden, dried up by the sun, full of vegetables tied on sticks and flowers run to seed. Other similar gardens, only separated from one another by trellis-work, extended all the way along a little arm of the Loire, which seemed the Bièvre of that part of the country. Beside the road lay linen spread out, nets drying, hemp steeping, and the rubbish of all these workmen's households.

Night came on ; a light was brought. The neighbouring gardens were also illuminated ; and all around was heard laughing, the sound of the plates among the leaves, all the folly of one of the suburban inns out here in the open air.

Labassindre was speaking, collecting in his memory all the residue of ancient theories he had heard in the Gymnasium about the rights of labourers, the future of the people, the tyranny of capital. He produced a great impression ; and those comrades who had come to spend the evening with the singer were in ecstasies over this easy eloquence, untrammelled by the forgotten dialect, free of all its commonplace.

These companions in working costume, black and tired, whom Roudic invited to sit down as they entered, extended themselves in indolent attitudes on the edge of the table ; poured themselves out large quantities of wine, which they swallowed noisily at one draught, wiping their mouths with the back of their sleeves, a glass in one hand a

pipe in another. Jack had never seen such manners, and now and then some rustic expression shocked him by its coarseness. Then they did not talk like other people, but made use among themselves of a sort of jargon that the child thought vulgar and ugly.

Jack was suddenly overcome by deep sadness before this tableful of workmen constantly changing, and without the least attention being paid to those who went out or came in.

‘That is what I must become,’ said he to himself in terror.

In the course of the evening Roudic presented him to the head of the smithing department—a man of the name of Lebescam, under whom the child was to make a beginning. This Lebescam, a hairy Cyclops, whose beard went almost into his eyes, made a face at the sight of this future apprentice dressed as a gentleman, whose fists were so small and his hands so white. In truth, Jack’s thirteen years had retained a somewhat feminine mien. His fair hair, although cut short, had pretty waves and that caressing air given by his mother’s fingers; and his distinguished aristocratic manner was even more noticeable now in his present vulgar surroundings.

Lebescam thought him looking very delicate, very frail.

‘O, it is the fatigue of the journey and his gen-

tleman's clothes that give him that look,' said the worthy Roudic, and turning to his wife: 'Clarisse, you will have to find a blouse for the apprentice. I'll tell you what, wife. You ought to make him go to his own room at once. He cannot keep his eyes open; and to-morrow he must be up at five o'clock. You understand, my little fellow—at five o'clock punctually. I shall come and call you.'

'Yes, M. Roudic.'

But before retiring Jack had to endure Labasindre's farewells, who wished to drink a glass for his especial benefit.

'Your health, Jack, my boy—the health of the workman! It is I who tell you, my children, whenever you please you will be the masters of the world.'

'O, the masters of the world, that is rather too much!' said Roudic, smiling. 'If only one were sure of having a little house in one's old days, with a few acres sheltered from the wind, one would not ask for more.'

Jack felt himself in a new world, where he would ever lack all that was necessary for success. He was afraid, for he guessed the distance between these people and himself; and he felt that the bridges were broken that spanned the impassable abyss. The thought of his mother alone sustained, reassured him.

The Vice.

In the middle of the smithy—an immense hall as imposing as a temple, into which the light falls from above in luminous yellow streaks, when the darkness of the corners is suddenly illumined by burning lights—an enormous piece of iron fixed to the floor keeps opening, like ever-hungry jaws, ever moving, ready to seize and grip fast the red-hot metal that is fashioned by the fire among a shower of sparks. It is the vice.

In beginning the education of an apprentice, he is first of all sent to the vice. There, whilst managing the heavy vice, which alone demands more strength than a child's arm can supply, he learns to know the tools of the workshop, and how to use and manage the fire.

Little Jack is at the vice, and I might spend ten years seeking another word without finding one that would give a truer impression of the terror, the suffocation, the horrible anguish caused him by all his surroundings.

In the first place there is the din, a terrible din ; three hundred hammers falling at the same time on the anvil, the whistling of thongs, the rollings of pulleys, and all the turmoil of a busy people — three hundred bare panting breasts rousing themselves, sending forth cries that have nothing human about them, in an intoxication of

strength, where the muscles seem to burst and respiration to be lost. Then there are wagons loaded with glowing metal crossing the hall on rails; there is the motion of the fans moving around the forges, blowing fire upon fire, nourishing the flame with human heat. Everywhere grinding, roaring echoings, howling, growling. One might imagine it to be the savage temple of some exacting barbarous idol. On the walls are hung tools formed like instruments of torture—cramps, tongs, pincers. Heavy chains hang from the ceiling. Everything is hard, strong, enormous, brutal; and quite at the end of the workshop, lost in a sombre, almost religious darkness, a gigantic crushing-hammer, moving a weight of thirty thousand kilogrammes, glides slowly between its two cast-iron posts, surrounded by the respect and admiration of the workshop as the shining black Baal of this temple sacred to the gods of strength. When the idol speaks, it is a deep hollow sound, which shakes the walls, the ceiling, the floor, and sends up the dust of the iron particles in clouds.

Jack is overwhelmed. He remains silently at his task among those men moving round the vice, half-naked, loaded with iron bars red at the point, perspiring, hairy, propping one another, distorting themselves; they also, in the intense heat in which they move, assuming the suppleness of melting fire, the resistance of metal softened by flame. Ah, if,

leaping space, the eyes of that foolish Charlotte could have seen her child Jack in the midst of this human swarm—pale, wan, streaming with perspiration, his sleeves turned back on to his thin arms, his blouse and his chemise half-open over his delicate white chest, his eyes red, his throat inflamed by the sharp dust floating around—what pity and what remorse she would have felt !

As every one in the workshop had to have some nickname, he received the appellation of the Aztec, on account of his thinness ; and the boy, once so pretty and fair, is likely to merit this name, to become the child of the factory—that poor little being deprived of air, jaded, suffocated, whose face ages as his body grows emaciated.

‘ Here, Aztec ; fire, my boy. Tighten the screw. D— it, look sharp !’

It is the voice of Lebescam the foreman, speaking in the midst of the tempest of all these countless noises. This black giant, to whom Roudic has intrusted the first education of the apprentice, every now and then stops to give him some advice, to teach him how to hold a hammer. The master is brutal, the child awkward. The master despises this feebleness ; the child fears this strength. He does what he is bid, tightens the screw as well as he can. But his hands are hardened and covered with blisters—enough to give him a fever, to make him cry. At times he is no longer conscious of

his life. It seems as though he also were a part of this complicated machinery, that he is a tool among the tools—something like a little pulley, without consciousness, without will ; turning, whistling along with the rest of the apparatus, directed by a hidden invisible force—that he now understands, that he admires and fears—steam !

It is steam that jumbles at the ceiling all those leathern bands that rise, fall, and cross one another, corresponding to pulleys, hammers, and bellows. It is steam that moves the crushing-hammer and those enormous planing-machines, under which the hardest iron is reduced by shavings thin as threads, twirled and twisted like hairs. It is steam that kindles the corners of the forge with a jet of fire, which dispenses work and power to all parts of the workshop. It is its dull sound, its regular motion, which so much moved the child on his first arrival ; and now it seems to him as though he only lived through steam, as though it had appropriated his breath, and made of him a thing as docile as all the machines it impels.

A terrible life !

At five o'clock in the morning Father Roudic used to call him. 'Come, get up, youngster !' His voice resounded through the whole house, which was built only of wood. A crust was hastily eaten, a drop of wine was drunk at the corner of the table, supplied by the beautiful Clarisse, still wearing her

nightcap. Then off to the factory, where a melancholy bell was tinkling, indefatigably prolonging its dong—dong—dong, as though it had to awaken not only the isle of Indret, but all the surrounding shores also, the water, the sky, the ports of Paimbœuf and Saint-Nazaire. There was a confused trampling, pushing, in the streets, in the yards, at the doors of the workshops. After the obligatory ten minutes were over, the flag was hauled down, showing that the factory was closed to the late comers. At the first time of absence, deduction of pay; after the second, temporary suspension; after the third, final expulsion.

Jack was very much afraid of 'missing the flag,' and very often was at the door long before the first stroke of the bell.

At the workshop Jack was not liked. Every body of men needs a scapegoat, some being on whom they can vent all their sarcasm, their nervous impatience, their fatigue. Jack filled this office at the forge. The other apprentices, who had almost all been born at Indret, and were sons or brothers of the workmen, being better protected, were also more spared; for these persecutions without retaliation can only be employed against the feeble, the harmless. No one defended him. The 'gaffer,' finding him quite too frail, had given up troubling about him, and abandoned him to the tender mercies of the whole room. Besides, what had he

come to Indret for, this delicate Parisian, who did not talk like other people, who said to his companions, 'Yes, sir, thank you, sir'? His vocation for mechanics had been so much vaunted. But the Aztec understood nothing at all about it. He could not even put in a rivet. Soon contempt aroused in these people a sort of cold-blooded cruelty, the revenge which strength exercises over intelligent feebleness. Not a day passed without some unkindness being shown him. The apprentices especially were cruel. One day one of them handed to him a piece of iron heated at the end to a dark-red heat: 'Take that, Aztec.' He had to spend a week in the infirmary after. Then there was the brutality, the thoughtlessness of all these men, accustomed to carry heavy weights, and who no longer knew the power of their blows.

It was only on Sundays that Jack had a little rest and change. On that day he could take out of his chest one of Dr. Rivals' books, and go off to the banks of the Loire to read it. At the extreme end of the island there is an old half-ruined tower called St. Hermeland's tower, which looks as though it might have been the lodge of some spy at the time of the Norman invasions. At the foot of this tower, in a hollow of the rock, the apprentice used to sit, his book open on his lap, the sound, the magic, the expanse of the water before him. The Sabbath made a joyous sound with all its bells,

ringing out repose and rest. Boats passed by in the distance ; and at many spots, far from him, children were bathing amid shouts and laughter.

He used to read ; but often M. Rivals' books were too difficult for him, were beyond the actual limit of his understanding, and left, as it were, nothing but a supply of good seed which was still dry, and which time must bring to light. Then he would stop, and remain there dreaming, losing himself in the splashing of the water on the stones, the regular movement of the incoming waves. He went away far, very far from the factory and the workmen, back to his mother and his little friend, to Sundays when he was very differently clad, very much happier than now. Thus, during a few hours, he could forget, could be happy. But the autumn came with its heavy rains and cruel winds that put an end to his sojourns at the St. Hermeland tower. After that he spent his Sundays with the Roudics.

His favourite among all his books, the one he read the oftenest, was Dante's *Inferno*. The description of all those tortures impressed him. In his childish imagination it was mingled with the sight he had before his eyes every day. He saw in the poet's lines those half-naked men, those flames, those great pits in the foundry, where the melted metal flowed in a bloody sheet ; and the moaning of the stream, the grinding of the gigantic saws, the dull sound of the crushing-hammer echoing in

those burning halls, made them resemble in his eyes the circles of the *Inferno*.

The Machines.

Once, however, he was a witness at the factory of an affecting ceremony, which helped him to understand better than any of Father Roudic's explanations that there was a grandeur and beauty in these things.

A magnificent steam-engine of one thousand horse-power had just been completed for one of the government gunboats. For a long time it had been standing in the fitting-up department, taking up its whole depth, surrounded by a swarm of workmen, erect, complete, but wanting the finishing stroke. Often Jack looked at it as he passed, but only from a distance, through the windows ; for no one except the fitters was allowed to enter. As soon as it was finished, the engine was to be sent to St.-Nazaire ; and what gave the particular and rare charm to its departure was that, in spite of its enormous weight and the complication of the machinery, the engineers of Indret had decided to embark it, all fitted up and in a single piece, since the formidable transport-machines which the factory has at its disposal permitted them to attempt this audacious undertaking. Every day they said, ' It will come off to-morrow ; ' but every time at the last moment there

was some detail to superintend, something to repair, to make perfect. At last it was ready. The order to embark was given.

It was a holiday for Indret. At one o'clock all the workshops were closed, the houses and the streets deserted. Men, women, children, all who lived in the island wanted to see the machine leave the fitting-up room, descend to the Loire, and cross over to the vessel which was to bear it away. Long before the great gate was opened, the crowd had collected outside the hall, waiting noisily, indulging in a holiday racket. At length the two portals of the workshop opened, and from the shadowy background the enormous mass was seen advancing, slowly, heavily, borne on a rolling platform, which must presently serve as a stage for raising it, and which halliards, moved by steam, carried along the rails.

When it appeared in the light, shining and grand and massive, it was greeted by tremendous cheers.

It paused a moment, as if to take breath and to let itself be admired, under the full sunshine, which made it glitter. Among the two thousand workmen at the factory there was, perhaps, not one who had not coöperated in this beautiful work according to his talent or his capability. But they had worked at it separately, each in his own department, almost groping their way, as the soldier fights during the

battle, lost amid the crowd and the noise, aiming straight in front of him, without calculating the effect or the use of his shots, enveloped by blinding red smoke, which prevents him from seeing anything beyond the corner in which he is fighting.

Now they saw her, their own machine, standing there complete, every piece adjusted. And they were proud. In one moment she was surrounded, and saluted by joyous laughter and shouts of triumph. They admired her as connoisseurs; they caressed her with their big hard hands; they patted her; they addressed her in their rough way: 'How are you, old lady?' The founders pointed with pride to the enormous screws of solid bronze: 'We founded them,' said they. The smiths replied, 'We worked the iron, we did; and there is some of our perspiration, too, in there.' And the coppersmiths, the riveters, not without reason, boasted of the enormous tank, painted with red-lead, like a war-elephant. If these praised the metal, the engineers, the draughtsmen, the fitters, extolled the form. Even our friend Jack said, gazing at his hands, 'Ah, rogue, you have given me fine blisters!'

It was almost necessary to employ force to keep off this fanatic crowd, as enthusiastic as an Indian tribe at the festival of Juggernaut, whom the cruel idol would have crushed on its way. The overseers ran about from side to side, dealing out

cuffs to clear the road ; and soon there only remained around the machine three hundred workmen, chosen out of all the workshops from among the strongest, who, all armed with handspikes or drawing mighty chains, only waited a sign to set the monster in movement.

‘ Ready, boys ? Hoist, then ! ’

Then a little fife, sprightly and shrill, was heard ; the machine began to move along the rails ; the copper, bronze, and steel, in its mass, glittered, while the gear of connecting-rods, bars, and pistons was moved along with a metallic clang. Like a completed monument that the workmen are leaving, it had been ornamented at the top with an enormous bouquet of foliage, surmounting this achievement of human labour with the grace, the smile of Nature. Whilst below the enormous mass of metal moved laboriously along, above the bunch of green rose and fell at every step, rustling gently in the pure air. On both sides the crowd formed a procession ; the directors, inspectors, apprentices, workmen, all marching pellmell with their eyes fixed on the machine, while the indefatigable fife directed them towards the river, where a steam-boat stood smoking on a level with the quay ready to start.

Behold it standing under the crane, the enormous steam-crane of the factory at Indret, the most powerful lever in the world. Two men climb on

to the platform, which is to rise with it by means of iron cables, all joined together above the bouquet by a monstrous ring forged out of one single piece. The steam whistles; the fife redoubles its little hurried, joyous, encouraging notes; the jib of the crane bends down like the neck of a great bird, seizes the machine in its curved beak, and lifts it slowly, slowly, with jerks. Now it towers above the crowd, the factory, and all Indret. There every one can see and admire it at his ease. In the golden sunlight, through which it moves, it seems to bid farewell to those numerous halls which have given it life, movement, even speech, and which it will never behold again.

For their part, the workmen feel, in contemplating it, the satisfaction of accomplished labour, that strange and divine emotion which repays in one moment the labours of a whole year, and places, even above all the trouble undergone, the pride in a difficulty that is overcome.

‘That’s what I call a fine piece,’ muttered old Roudic, who, with a serious mien, his arms bare, still trembling from the great effort of hauling, was wiping his eyes, almost blinded by tears of admiration. The fife has not ceased its exciting music; but the crane begins to turn, to bend towards the side of the river, to deposit the machine on the boat that stands impatiently waiting.

On a sudden, a deafening crack is heard, fol-

lowed by a terrible piercing cry, reëchoed from all breasts. By the emotion that spreads through the air, all recognise death, unexpected, sudden death, which opens out a way for itself with strong and violent hand. For one moment there is a tumult, an indescribable terror. What can have happened? One of the workmen on the platform has been caught between one of the supporting chains suddenly extended for the descent and the hard metal of the machine.

‘Quick, quick, boys, back the machine!’

But in vain they hasten and strive to snatch the unhappy man from the raging beast; it is all over! All heads are raised, all arms stretched out in one great curse, and the women weep and hide their eyes in their shawls and in the lappets of their caps, so as not to see the shapeless remains which are being placed on a barrow. The man has been pounded, cut in two. The blood, driven forth violently, has besprinkled the steel, the copper, even the green branch above. No more piping, no more shouting. In the midst of sinister silence the machine completes its revolution, while one group departs towards the village, bearers, women, a whole troop, all in tears.

There is fear now visible in all eyes. The work has become terrible; it has received the baptism of blood, and turned its strength against those from whom it had received it. There is quite a sigh of

relief when the monster stands on the boat, which gives way under its weight, and sends to both shores two or three large waves. The whole river trembles, and seems to say, 'How heavy it is!' Yes, indeed, it is heavy ; and the workmen look at one another, and shudder.

Behold it embarked at last, with its cylinder and its boilers beside it. The blood which soiled it has been hastily wiped away ; it has resumed its former splendour, but not its inert impassibility. It appears alive and armed. Standing proudly on the deck of the boat which carries it away, and which it appears itself to impel, it hastens towards the sea as though it longed to consume coal, to devour space, to shake its smoke where at this moment it shakes its bunch of green. It is so beautiful now that the workmen of Indret have forgotten its crime, and, saluting its departure with one great last hurrah, they follow and accompany it with loving eyes. Go your ways, machine ; journey across the whole world ; follow the line marked out for you, straight and inexorable ; march against the wind, the sea and its storms. Men have made you so strong that you have nothing to fear. But since you are strong, be not wicked. Restrain that terrible power that you have just tested at your departure. Move the vessel without anger, and, above all, show respect for human life if you will do honour to the factory of Indret.

That evening, from one end of the island to the other, there was laughter and feasting. Although the accident of the day had somewhat chilled the enthusiasm, every home wished to partake of the feast that had been prepared. It was no longer the island of labour—breathless and panting, and so soon asleep when evening came on. Everywhere, even in the gloomy castle, was heard singing and the clinking of glasses behind the bright panes, whose light was reflected afar, mingled in the Loire with the light of the stars. At the Roudics' a long table collected the numerous friends, the *élite* of the workshop. At first they spoke of the accident—the children were not old enough to work; the director had promised the widow a pension. Then once more the machine occupied all thoughts. This long labour of many months' duration was now nothing but a remembrance. The men reminded one another of the various episodes, the difficulties of the work. It was something to hear Lebescam, the hairy giant, telling of the resistance of the metal, and the trouble they had had to bend it at the forge.

'I see that the welding does not hold. I say to the comrades: "Now, at it—right good blows! Now, at it, burners; help me, and quickly!"'

He thought he was still at work. His clenched fists resounded on the table, and made it tremble; his eyes shone as though they reflected the light of


the forge ; and the others nodded their heads with an air of approbation. Jack also listened with interest for the first time. He was the conscript among the veterans ; and you may fancy that the remembrance of great labours made their throats very dry, and that all this did not go on without many a round and bumper. Presently they began to sing—for it must come to that when there are enough present to sing in chorus—‘*Vers les rives de France ;*’ and Jack, mingling his voice with this concert of false voices, repeated with the others,

‘*Vers les rives de France
Voguons en chantant.*’

If the people at Les Aulnettes had seen him, they would have been satisfied. Bronzed by the open air and the heat of the forge, the blisters on his hands scarred and grown callous, joining his voice to the commonplace refrain, he quite seemed to belong to these people. He looked a true workman ; and Lebescam remarked it to Father Roudic.

SPIELHAGEN.

BORN IN MAGDEBURG, FEB. 24, 1829; NOW LIVING IN
BERLIN.



SPIELHAGEN.

FRIEDRICH SPIELHAGEN, though born in Middle Germany, was brought at the early age of five to live in the romantic old town of Stralsund, situated on the Baltic coast, and surrounded by some of its most beautiful scenery. The impressions of this childish home sank deep into his nature, and were never forgotten ; he has become the novelist of the Baltic—its storms, its calms, its beechwoods live in his works. At the universities of Berlin and Leipzig he studied law, literature, and philosophy. He then became a teacher (*privat docent*) ; but literature exercised a powerful attraction over him, and since 1862 he has devoted himself exclusively to its pursuit.

Spielhagen has been unanimously considered as the greatest of contemporary German novelists ; and rightly so, for he embodies in his works all the merits and failings of his countrymen's romances, their careful observation and thoroughness, their inordinate length and tendency to sentimentalism. His novels are social photographs, that admirably reflect the manners and ideas of his time and country. The son of a Prussian bureaucrat, Spielhagen had witnessed from childhood the

working of the state machinery that acts upon the people with the accuracy of a chronometer ; and he saw how, just as this instrument is a passive tool in the hands of its owner, so the German people, naturally inelastic, have grown, after centuries of over-government, to be mere helpless children in the hands of the State. With rare insight and comprehension of the real nature of Liberal ideas, Spielhagen, even in his earliest productions, tried to warn his countrymen against the dangers into which they were blindly drifting. His novels therefore are all, more or less, novels with a purpose, and their various themes bear a visible analogy to the development of his nation. His first story, *Clara Vere*, an attempt to continue Tennyson's poem, was poor and utterly un-English in sentiment ; still it attracted notice ; and so did his second and far superior work, *Auf der Düne*, in which he first gave evidence of his power vividly to describe scenery and atmospheric effects. The scene is laid amid the weird, arid beauty of the flat sandy Baltic shores. But *Problematische Naturen* and its continuation, *Durch Nacht zum Licht*, published in 1860 and 1861, established their writer's reputation. The novel and its sequel consist of eight volumes, and contain as much matter as half-a-dozen English three-volume romances. They are oppressively long, and require much leisure on the reader's part. The characters de-

scribed are solitary uncomprehended souls of the Byronic stamp, but born in Germany, and nourished on German philosophy and theories. They are men who can find no place or work in the world, living embodiments of the German predilection for dreaming and speculating till the capability of living real life and seeing real things in their true proportion has been enfeebled or destroyed. Every character is unnatural and stilted, their language as artificial as their ideas. The scene is laid in a Prussian château, and the time is that immediately preceding the revolution of 1848, when disquiet reigned in all spirits, evincing itself among the aristocracy in recklessness, among the burghers and thinkers in Utopian or despairing conclusions. The books reveal the impassable barrier that exists in Germany between the aristocracy and the middle classes—a mute but virulent antagonism—and show the dangers that have resulted, and will still result, from the insensate pride of caste evinced by the Prussian nobility.

In *Die von Hohenstein* Spielhagen paints the abortive revolution of 1848, and continues his attacks upon the aristocracy. But the story is too wildly romantic and unreal. All noblemen are delineated as fools or knaves; all plebeians as models of virtue. This is to overshoot the mark. *In Reih und Glied* ('In the Ranks') was the next of these social romances, and deals with the period

of political reaction that followed the outbreak of 1848. Its hero, a Socialist leader, has been identified with Ferdinand Lassalle, and certainly some of the incidents of his romantic career present suspicious analogies. It deals with the question of the working man, and again the people and nobles are placed in hostile juxtaposition. We are shown the excellent qualities of the former, the coarse-mindedness and mere veneer of refinement that characterise their social superiors. This novel, too, is of tedious length ; its main ideas are swamped by a number of minor incidents and characters, by lay sermons and didactic moralisings. It is intended to hold up to view the two grand antagonistic social principles of self-help and state-help. The latter, of course, is made to prove a failure. The working of the former unfortunately is not shown at all ; it is talked and theorised about, but not put into practice : hence the novel fails as a convincing proof of that which it would assert.

Hammer und Amboss may be pronounced Spielhagen's strongest novel. This, too, tries to solve a social problem. Its fundamental idea is that German social conditions sicken from being overweighted by the traditions of the past ; that Germans have not yet rid themselves of the barbarian notion that the world consists only of masters and slaves, hammers and anvils ; that the whole working of their life tends to foster this slavery ; and

that it is this 'which makes the German Hercules a cripple, checks the free circulation of his blood, creates hypertrophic asthenic conditions,' this that fills its prisons to overflowing. The hero of this story is a young boy who runs away from school, and is disowned by his father. Thrown upon the world, he falls into the hands of a smuggler baron, who receives him into his house and initiates him into his trade. On the occasion of a contest with the custom-house officers, Georg is caught and imprisoned for seven years. The director of the House of Correction, a large-hearted and liberal man, recognises that the youth is no common malefactor; he takes pity on him, and tries to raise him. Once, on the occasion of a revolt, Georg is able to save the director's life. From this time forward he is yet more trusted, and assumes a post of some responsibility. Later on he obtains his release, goes to work at a factory, and eventually becomes its head. He has various adventures, and marries twice. But this part is, as is usual with Spielhagen, the weakest portion of the story; his love-scenes and his women are artificial and unattractive. The best parts are those in which the wildly romantic life amongst the smugglers, the existence in the House of Correction, and work at the factory are described.

After the publication of this story there was a decline in the merit of Spielhagen's work. He

wrote many shorter stories—a department in which he does not shine, since here his poverty of plot, his want of art, are more visible. In *Sturmflut*, written after the events of 1870, he once more rose to his best level. The story deals with the financial crisis that followed the senseless speculation fever that seized Germany, and more or less all Europe, after the Franco-German War. The bursting of the bubble is very subtly connected with the bursting of a destructive storm-wave upon the Baltic coast. In *Plattland*, a long novel that tells of the thunder-charged atmosphere that pervaded Germany before 1848, and in a short novelette, *Quisiana*, Spielhagen has again fallen below the mark. He is therefore an unequal writer, good at his best, writing a lively and agreeable style, full of subtle psychological and social observation, but apt to run into verbosity, and swamp even his best scenes in a flood of words. His *dénouements* are inartistic, his novels often end abruptly, his moral standard is not high, and is reared upon expediency and self-interest. He reproduces, without regard to art, the unfinished and incomplete element in human affairs, and this marks him a realist; but he is not so in the sense lately introduced by the French. Perhaps he furnishes the best illustration of what shape realistic novel-writing must take in a German, for whom idealism is, after all, the groundwork of national character.

One of the best scenes ever written by Spielhagen is his account of a storm in the Baltic, that occurs in *Hammer und Amboss*. Here his power of bringing natural phenomena into connection with the moods and acts of his characters is admirably displayed. Chapters XXXV. and XXXVI. of this book are masterly, though even here we could wish for a little more brevity and self-restraint. We have not space to quote the scene in the House of Correction, where the director, by his quiet decision, his humanitarian sympathy, quells the disturbance created by the storm that has roused the fears of the inmates. He appeals to their better instincts, and not in vain.

The Storm.

And in truth there came a storm, such as had never before raged over these shores within the memory of man, although many a bold north-east wind blows over this low sandy chalky coast all through the year.

It was about midnight when I was awakened by a thundering crash that made the old house shake to its foundations, followed by a clatter and smash of falling tiles, slamming doors and shutters, which sounded like the report and clatter of the smaller artillery while a battery of thirty-five pounders is being fired. This was the storm that

had been so long predicted by Nature and by my own feelings.

It was two o'clock when we returned to the house. At the first stroke of the bell Paula appeared in the hall, but the director only smiled kindly, patted her cheeks, and stepped on quietly to his own room, whither I followed him. He had not spoken to his daughter, because he could not speak. His face was ashy pale, while dark-red spots glowed on his sunken cheeks. By a movement of his hand he asked me to help him retire to rest, then he gave me a look of thanks and closed his eyes in deathlike exhaustion.

I had seated myself at his bedside, and never turned my eyes from that pale noble countenance. It was overspread by solemn peace ; gradually the red spots disappeared from his cheeks, not a movement revealed that a soul yet dwelt under this lofty forehead. I felt as though I were watching by a corpse.

Thus slowly and solemnly the hours passed by. In my whole life I never felt any stronger contrast than the calm noble face of the sleeping man formed to the wild fury of the storm which raged on outside with undiminished violence. Well might he sleep ! The blessed heights among which his spirit hovered could not be reached by the mightiest pinions of any earthly storm.

I must also have slept some time, for when I

again raised my head the gray dawn was peeping through the closed curtains. The director still lay there, as he had lain in the night, his eyes closed, his white hands folded across his breast. I got up quietly and left the room. I needed air. I must try to shake off the burden that lay on my heart.

When I stepped across the silent hall I was surprised to see that the hand of the great clock at the foot of the stairs pointed to eight. From the scanty light I should have guessed it to be about five or six. But when I stepped out I soon saw why it could not be lighter. The black coffin-like mantle that had covered the earth in the night had now changed to gray—a pale dawn that was neither night nor day; and the violence of the storm was undiminished. When I left the sheltering gable of the house behind me, I was obliged to plant myself firmly on my feet, so as not to be thrown down. Bending forward, I traversed the garden, usually so lovely, now a desolate scene of ruin. There lay little trees torn up by the roots, and larger ones broken off a few feet above the roots. The path was strewn with branches and twigs; the air was literally filled with whirling leaves. Only the old plane-trees on the terrace seemed as though they would resist the rage of the storm, although their majestic summits were beaten hither and thither in wild waves. I worked my way to the terrace, the only spot from which there

was an outlook, even though limited, towards the weather-side.

Terrible, indeed, it was. The sky and the sea a leaden gray ; and between the sky and the sea white spots like snowflakes that a November wind whirls round. These white spots were seagulls, and their mournful cry resounded now and then over to us. On the lofty bastion opposite the storm had pressed down the tall grass, that usually played so merrily in the wind, till it was almost flat, as though heavy rollers had passed across it ; and above the long low dam on the right there rose from time to time shining lines, for which I could at first not account. Could these be the crests of waves ? It seemed impossible. The dam was twelve feet high, or more, and behind it was a broad sandy beach, on which was a much-frequented bathing establishment. Hitherto I had only seen the sea across the dam in the perspective of distance ; but these shining lines, if they were waves, were not dancing out at sea ; I could plainly see how they rose and fell and tumbled over each other, and torn off, lashed into dust and foam, were driven on across the dam. It was the surge that had risen up to the edge of the dam.

Sadder than I had ever felt before, I was seated an hour afterwards in my office.

Suddenly, through the roar of the storm, penetrated a whining sound that seemed to come from

the clouds, followed by other similar single tones ; at the same moment the door of the hall was torn open, and in rushed the doctor breathlessly :

‘It is as we thought,’ he panted, hurrying past me into the director’s room, whither I followed him, with an emotion that was something better than curiosity.

‘It is as we thought,’ repeated the doctor, taking off his spectacles, and wiping from his face the wet sand and the dust with which he was covered from head to foot. ‘In an hour, at most two hours, the water will have mounted above the dam, unless it should make a breach before, which is to be feared, in one or two places.’

‘And what precautions are being taken?’

‘Every one is folding his hands calmly. I ran on the spot to the Director of Police and the President to tell them to send every man, who was capable of moving his arms, to the dam ; and to summon back the battalion. And—can you believe in such madness?—because no counter-order had come, they marched off an hour ago to the manœuvres, and are now working their way along the high-road, unless the storm has already thrown them all right and left into the ditch, which appears to me more probable. In any case they cannot yet be far ; they can be back in an hour or an hour and a half at most, if some messengers are sent to them on horseback. They are

more wanted here than in the ditches along the high-road. I represented all this to those gentlemen. What do you suppose the police-director answered? He had been a soldier himself, he said, and knew that an officer must obey orders. He could not for one moment imagine that the battalion could turn back at his command.'

The director paced the room slowly, with his eyes fixed on the ground.

'What is the matter?' he asked of a turnkey, who entered the room with an expression of alarm.

'There are a number of people here, sir.'

'Where?'

'At the gate, sir.'

'What sort of people?'

'Most of them are from the street by the bridge, sir. They say they will all be drowned, sir. And because the institution lies so much higher—'

Without answering a word, the director left the room and the house. We followed him across the courtyard. He had gone out just as he was, in his short silk coat, with neither hat nor cap.

So he walked on before us, and the storm that raged in the courtyard tore his hair and lashed the ends of his long moustache like the ends of a flag.

We came to the gate, which the surly gate-keeper was obliged to unlock. Last night, when one of the prison-doors had been opened, I had

seen a horrible sight ; here I was to behold a touching mournful spectacle that has remained no less clear in my remembrance.

There might have been about fifty people, mostly women, but also some men, old and young, and children, some still in their mothers' arms. Almost all carried some possessions in their hands, or had set them down on the ground before them, the first, and not always the best, that they could lay hands on in their hurry and fright. I saw a woman holding a large water-jug on her shoulder, which she grasped with difficulty, as though it would break if she put it down to the ground. I saw a man carrying an empty birdcage that the wind tossed backwards and forwards. Scarcely was the gate opened than all rushed into the yard, as though driven by furies. The porter wanted to hold them back, but the director seized his arm.

‘Not so,’ said he.

We had stepped aside to let the wild stream rush past us. Now it spread out over the courtyard, while some hastened towards the building.

‘Stop!’ cried the director.

The people stood.

‘Let in the women and children,’ said he to his people, ‘and the old and sick. You men may go in for a moment to warm yourselves ; in ten minutes I expect you here again. This is no time for men to sit over the fire.’

Fresh fugitives were already coming through the open gate.

‘Let them in—let them all in!’ said the director.

‘Good people,’ exclaimed I, ‘comfort yourselves; he will help you, if any human being can help!’

They pressed towards me. They told me of their great trouble: how the water had been rising ever since midnight almost a foot an hour—that was twelve hours ago now; and in the highest places the dam was only thirteen or fourteen feet high. The Bridge-street and the next one to it, the Swede-street, were situate very little above the level of the sea; and if the dam broke they would all perish. Walter, the commander of the pilots, who understood all about such matters, had always said that something ought to be done about it; but there was never any money for that sort of thing, that was needed for the bastions and casemates on the land side.

‘And they have stuck my two boys into uniform,’ said an old man. ‘Now they are lying on the high-road; and there they certainly cannot help us.’

‘But he will help you,’ I said.

The old man gave me an incredulous glance.

‘He is a good gentleman,’ said he, ‘every child knows that; but what can he do?’

Just then the director came back from the house, and at the same moment, from three differ-

ent doors, which led to the different wings of the principal buildings, the people from the House of Correction poured forth. There were about four hundred of them, all more or less vigorous men, in their gray workhouse jackets. Most of them were already provided with spades, hoes, axes, and ropes, and whatever other tools and serviceable implements could be taken from the stores of the institution. The men were led by their overseers.

Thus they came on with military step.

‘Halt ! Face !’ commanded the overseers ; and the men stood drawn up in three ranks, firm and straight, like a company under arms.

‘Come here, you men !’ cried the director, in a resounding voice. The people stepped forward. All eyes were fixed firmly on him, while he stood meditating, his head bent down. Suddenly he looked up, swept his gaze over the group, and, in a voice of which no one could have thought his weak chest capable, he spoke :

‘My men, every one of us has had an hour in his life that he would give much to be able to buy back. Now to-day great happiness is granted you. Each of you, whoever he may be, whatever he may have done—each of you will be able to buy back that hour, and be again what he was before, in the eyes of God, of himself, and of all good men ! You have been told of the matter in hand. It is to risk your own lives for the lives of others—of

women and children ! I do not make any vain promises. I do not say, "What you are going to do will set you free." On the contrary, I say to you, you will return to this place as you left it—no reward, no freedom, nothing awaits you when your labour is achieved this evening, and that door closes behind you again—nothing but the thanks of your director, a glass of stiff grog, and a soft bed, such as an honest fellow deserves. Will you stand by your director on these terms ? Whoever is willing, let him lift up his right hand and exclaim, "Yes !" at the top of his voice.'

And up flew four hundred arms, and from four hundred throats came a thundering 'Yes!' that sounded above the storm.

In an instant, at the director's command, and under his direction, the troop, joined by those men who had before taken shelter in the institution, was divided into three bands. One of these was led by Süssmilch, the second by me, and the third by a prisoner named Mathes, who had formerly been a shipwright, and was a very intelligent active man. The overseers were drawn up in the ranks.

'To-day, my children, we are all alike ; and every one is his own overseer,' said the director. So we marched out to the gate.

The way along the narrow street into which the chief gate led was not long, and we quickly passed through it ; but at the old and rather narrow

gateway at the other end of the street, we found a strange unexpected obstacle, which convinced me more than anything that had occurred before of the strength of the storm. The old gateway was really nothing but a wide open archway; yet it took us longer to pass through than if we had been obliged to burst open the heaviest gates of oak and ironwork, with such violence did the wind press through the opening. Like a hundred-armed giant, he stood outside, and threw back each individual who ventured towards him, as though he were a powerless infant. Only by our combined efforts, taking each other's hands, and holding fast on to the inner rough surface of the gateway, did we succeed in forcing our way through the pass. Then we pressed quickly on along the ramparts, between the tall bastion on one side and the buildings of the institution on the other, till we reached the spot where our help was needed.

It was the long low dam that touched the bastion, and across which I had often cast longing glances from the terrace on to the sea and the island. It was about five hundred paces in length. Then came the harbour, with its stone moles built out far into the sea. Why this spot was in such imminent danger during a storm was evident at my first glance. The water driven in from the open sea by the violence of the storm was caught, as it were, in a *cul-de-sac* between the tall bastion

that rested on mighty retaining walls and the long harbour-dam. Since it could neither escape to the right nor to the left, it must seek to break through the hindrance that here opposed it. But if the dam gave way, the whole lower part of the town was lost. That must be evident to any one who, looking towards the town from the dam, saw the narrow little alleys of the harbour. Most of the roofs were not even so high as the dam, so that it was possible to see right over them into the inner harbour, which lay on the side of the harbour-suburb opposite to us, and where we could now see the masts of the ships rocking to and fro like reeds.

I do not think it took me more than a quarter of a minute completely to grasp the situation as I have here represented it ; and I am hardly likely to have had more time granted me. My mind and nerves were too much overcome by the sight of the danger we had come to combat. I, who had passed my whole life on the seacoast, who had spent whole days tossed about in little or big vessels, who had watched many a storm—at any rate from the shore—and with unwearied attention and sympathetic shuddering,—I thought I knew the sea. Now I found that I knew it no better than any one can know a bomb, who has never seen one explode, scattering death and destruction around it. Not even in imagination had I come near the reality. This was no longer the sea, consisting of

water which forms greater or lesser waves, which waves strike the shore with greater or lesser violence—this was a monster, a world of monsters, who, with wide-open foaming jaws, came roaring, howling, snapping along. No longer was it any definite thing ; all shape, even all colour, had disappeared : it was chaos that had come to swallow up the world of men.

I do not think there was one among the whole troop on whom this sight had not a powerful effect. I see them still, those four hundred men, standing where they had stormed on to the dam, with pale faces, their eyes now fixed on the howling chaos, now on their neighbours, and then on the man who had led them hither, and who alone was able to say what ought to be done here and what could be done.

Never yet had a helpless troop a better leader. The splendid man ! I see him with the faithful eyes of love, that look back into the past, so often, in so many situations ; and always he appears to me great and beautiful, but never greater and more beautiful than in this moment, as he stood on the highest point of the dam, holding on by a flagstaff that he had caused to be set up there—never greater, more beautiful, or more heroic.

Yes, his bearing was heroic, and his glance was heroic, as in one moment it grasped danger and deliverance ; and there was heroism in his voice,

when, in unwearied sharp clear tones, in a few determined words, he gave the necessary orders. Some were to go down into the alleys of the harbour, and bring whatever empty casks, chests, and boxes they could lay hands on ; some to go up to the bastion, where there was earth in plenty, with spades, shovels, barrows, and baskets. Some were to descend with saws, axes, and ropes into the neighbouring glacis, to fell the young trees that had for years been awaiting an enemy who was there to-day ; others were to go to the neighbouring wharf to invite the ships' carpenters to come and help, and to obtain a few dozen large planks that we absolutely needed either by good words or by force.

Not half an hour had gone by, and the work, planned with true genius, was in full swing. Here baskets of earth were being lowered into the breaches that the sea had torn in the dam ; there stakes were driven in, and a network of branches made between them ; elsewhere a wall of planks was being constructed. And all came hurrying and hastening, and digging and shovelling, and hammering and carting, and dragging hundred-weights, with such zeal, such strength, such strong self-sacrificing courage, that the tears still come into my eyes if I only think of it. Then I remember that these were those same men whom society had cast out ; those same men who had become

thieves, perhaps, for the sake of a few morsels or for some childish desire ; the same men I had so often seen creeping sadly through the yards of the institution to their work ; the same men whom the storm, striking against the walls of their prison, had last evening roused to frantic terror. There lay the town below them ; they could rush in and rob, burn, and murder to their hearts' content—who could prevent them ? There lay the wide world open before them ; they need only run in, and away—who could keep them back ? Here was a labour, more difficult, troublesome, and dangerous than any they had yet done—who could force them to it ? There was the storm, at which they trembled yesterday, raging in most terrible form ; why did they not tremble to-day ? Why did they go joking and laughing into actual danger of death, when they were to fetch in the great ship's mast, driven hither from the harbour, and now cast against the dam like a battering-ram by the waves. Why indeed ? I think if all men would answer this 'why' as I do, there would be no more masters and servants ; then we should no longer hear the old sad song of the hammer that does not want to be an anvil ; then— But why answer a question that only the world's history can answer ? Why expose the presentiments that we feel in our hearts to a world that passes indifferently by, or perhaps only stops to look, to mock at them ?

Whoever saw this labour, whoever saw these men tearing skin from flesh and flesh from bone in their tremendous dreadful exertions, did not laugh ; and those who saw it were the poor inhabitants of the harbour-alleys, mostly women and children, for the men had to share in the work. They came and stood below in the shelter of the wall, and looked up with anxious astonished looks at the gray jackets there, whom they had hitherto only regarded with shy suspicious glances, when they were led through the streets, coming in little troops from some external labour. To-day they had no fear of the gray jackets ; to-day they prayed that the food and drink might be blessed which they themselves brought of their own free will. They had no fear of the four hundred gray jackets ; rather they wished that their number could be doubled or trebled.

But there were people who lived far out of reach of danger, whose property and lives were not in question at the present moment, and who were therefore in a situation bitterly to resent the improper and unlawful proceedings carried on here.

I remember that, one after another, the Police-Director von Raharb ; the President von Krossow ; the lieutenant-general and commander of the fortress, his Excellency Count Dankelheim, came, and endeavoured, by prayers, commands, and threats, to persuade our leader to bring his dreaded brigade

once more under bolt and bar. Yes, I remember that towards evening they all came together to attempt a combined storm; and I can still smile when I remember the cheerful calm with which that good brave man drove back their assault.

‘What would you have, gentlemen?’ said he. ‘Would you really prefer that hundreds should loose their lives, and the property of thousands be destroyed, rather than that a dozen, or even a few dozen, of these poor rogues should seek their liberty in flight, which, to tell the truth, they have honestly earned to-day? Besides, when the danger is over, I shall lead them back. Till then, no one shall drive me from here, unless he can do so by force; and fortunately not one of you, gentlemen, is able to do that. And now, gentlemen, this discussion must come to an end, for night is coming on; at most we have only another half-hour to make our preparations for the night. I wish you a good-evening, gentlemen.’

And with these words he waved his hand towards the dignitaries (who retreated with crest-fallen looks), and turned to the spot where his presence was needed.

More so than ever at this moment; for now, just before the beginning of the night, it seemed as though the storm were gathering all its strength for one last decisive attack. I feared we must be defeated, that the ‘desperate six hours’

labour had been in vain. The gigantic waves no longer retreated; their crests were torn off and tossed across the dam far away into the streets. The crowd assembled below rushed asunder with cries of alarm. Scarcely a single one of us labourers could stand now. I saw daring fellows who had hitherto played with danger turn pale, and heard them say, 'It is impossible; it can no longer be done.'

And now came the most horrible act in this dreadful drama.

A little Dutch ship, that had lain outside on the roadstead, had been torn away from its anchors, and was tossed hither and thither like a nutshell by those dreadful breakers, from the depth to the height, from the height to the depth, and with each wave nearer to the dam that we were defending. We could see the despairing gesture of the unfortunate men who clung to the yards; we could imagine that we heard their cries of alarm.

'Can we do nothing,' exclaimed I—'nothing?' turning to the director with tears of despair in my eyes.

He shook his head sadly.

'One thing, perhaps,' said he. 'If the ship is thrown right up here, we may attempt to hold it firm, so that it is not washed back by the breakers. If we do not succeed, they are lost, and we too; for their vessel, tossed to and fro, would make a breach in the dam that we could not possibly repair. Have

some strong stakes struck in, George, and let an end of one of our thickest ropes be fastened to them. There is still the barest possibility, but still it is a possibility. Come !

We hastened to the spot where the vessel must probably strand, and from which it was now only a few hundred yards distant. The men had retreated from the dam, and had sought shelter from the boundless fury of the storm wherever they could ; but now, when they saw their leader himself seize an axe, they all came back and worked with a sort of madness, compared with which all that they had till now achieved was but child's play.

The stakes were driven in, the ropes attached to them. I and three other men, who were considered the strongest, stood on the rampart, awaiting the right moment—terrible moments, that froze the blood in the veins of even the boldest, that might have bleached the brown hair of a youth.

And what we had hardly deemed possible succeeded. An enormous breaker comes rushing on, bearing the boat on its crest. It breaks, it pours forth a deluge that flows over us, but we stand firm. With our nails we hold on to the stakes ; and when we are once more able to look round, the ship is lying, like a dead whale, high up on the dam. We rush forward : a hundred hands are at once occupied in throwing ropes round the masts, a hundred others in loosing the pale men—five in number—

from the yards, to which they had tied themselves. It is done before the next wave comes in. Will it tear our booty from us? It comes on ; and one more, and another ; but the ropes hold. Each wave is weaker than its predecessor ; the fourth does not even reach the top, the fifth remains far below it. Suddenly there is a pause in the terrible ceaseless thunder that has deafened us for so many hours to-day ; the flags on the trembling masts in the inner harbour, that had been lashed eastwards all at once, hang straight down, and then flutter towards the west. The violence of the storm is broken, the wind has changed, the victory is ours !

The victory is ours. Every one knows it at the same moment. An endless shout of hurrah bursts from the throats of these rough men. They shake each other's hands, they fall into each others' arms. Hurrah ! hurrah ! and once more, hurrah !

The victory is ours ; it has been dearly bought.

When my eyes seek him whom we all have to thank for everything, they no longer find him at the spot where I had last seen him.

But I see men running to the spot, and I run with them. I run faster than they do, driven by anxiety that lends me wings. I push my way through a few dozen of them closely grouped together, and all are bent over one man, who lies on the ground on the knees of the old sergeant. And the man is deathly pale, and his lips are covered

with bloody foam, and round about him the ground is coloured with blood, freshly shed—with his blood, the heart's blood of the noblest of men.

‘Is he dead?’ I hear one of the men asking. But this hero must not die yet; he has still one more duty to fulfil. He beckons to me with his eyes as I bend over him, and moves his lips, which give forth no sound; but I have understood him. I put both my arms round him and raise him up. Now his tall, thin, royal form stands upright, leaning on me. All the men can see him—the men he has led hither, and whom he now means to lead back. And now he beckons again with his eyes to his hand, and I take it, as it hangs down limp and wax-like, and it points in the direction of the road along which we came at midday. There was not one man present who durst disobey that dumb silent command. They collect together, they fall into their ranks; the sergeant and I bear the dying leader. So we go back in a long, slow, solemn procession.

Night has come on; only a few solitary gusts of wind blow past us, and remind us of the terrible day we have all passed through. The prisoners, who have worked outside the house to-day, are sleeping on the bed of a good conscience, which their director had promised them that night. Their director sleeps too, and his pillow is as soft as death for a great and good cause can make it.

VON SACHER-MASOCH.

BORN IN LEMBERG, GALICIA, JAN. 27, 1836; NOW
LIVING IN GRATZ.

LEOPOLD VON SACHER-MASOCH.

LEOPOLD VON SACHER-MASOCH takes us into a fantastic and unfamiliar atmosphere. In his novels we do not move among the pallid scenes of the North, among ordered social conditions, and men and women morally effete from cultured high pressure. He transports us into a remote corner of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and depicts its people and their social status with a powerful pen, an accurate knowledge, and a pessimism as remarkable as it is depressing. We hear much of the Slavs nowadays and the Panslavonic question, but few people are really well informed on the matter. If they would gain information in a light and yet striking and incisive way, we commend them to Sacher-Masoch's novels. The best all deal with Galicia, and the scenes are laid in or near the town of Kolomea, and treat of the noble proprietors and the peasants. These two classes are always waging an internecine warfare—a warfare that was yet sharper many years ago before the Austrian Government freed the tillers of the soil from a worse than Egyptian bondage. The novelty of his themes

alone would mark Sacher-Masoch an original writer, even if his treatment did not bear out this character. In France he has won for himself a high reputation, while in Germany he is most unjustly attacked, his strong anti-German feelings having aroused against him all the hatred of the patriotic press. Still even his enemies cannot deny his genius.

Sacher-Masoch's principal work is the *Legacy of Cain*, which proposes to treat of all the evils incident to mankind. These are pronounced as six by the author, and into these six sections he divides his work. Only two of these six are as yet published ; they deal with love and property, both of which questions Sacher-Masoch investigates upon the basis of Schopenhauer's and Darwin's theories. He does not, however, seek to paint the world only as under a curse—the curse of Cain—he does not abandon it in despair ; and though he thinks it the worst of all possible worlds, he shows how it is not only man's duty, but how it lies in his power to extract the best from it. Like Darwin, he thinks that man need not remain rooted in those conditions in which he was born, but can rise above them physically and intellectually. In an impressive proem to this prose epic of human life, Sacher-Masoch shows how the world is bad and imperfect ; how life is a penance ; how man is only the most reasonable, rapacious, and cruel of all brutes.

Every one desires to live, no matter how and at what cost. Joseph is daily sold by his brethren; the blood of Abel cries daily to Heaven. Neither is enjoyment a reality. Love is a delusion; we wake all too soon to the humiliating perception that we are Nature's tools. Peoples and states are only men who combine together to do injury. War, not rarely entered upon under illusive enthusiasms, is nothing but the struggle for existence on a larger scale. Every one seeks to live through others, through murder and theft, and must live through himself and his work. Work alone frees us from all misery. So long as some let others work for them while they live in abundance, so long as a portion of mankind is enslaved, there is, and will be, no peace on earth. Death is the only good, the only Deliverer. Happiness consists in the recognition of these truths. These six, Love, Property, the State, War, Work, and Death, are the legacy of Cain, who slew his brother; and his brother's blood cried unto Heaven, and the Lord spoke to Cain: And now art thou cursed upon the earth; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

Each section is subdivided into five stories, in four of which the evil passions, aroused by love and property, are delineated with mordant power, while in each case the last presents us with a possible and harmonious solution. Love may be merely

a passion used by nature as a means to an end ; but it can and should be something higher. A marriage should also rest upon intellectual sympathy. Woman must not worship man blindly as her superior whom she obeys without question ; he must lift her, so that she stands beside him as his friend. Only thus can the race be raised, and develop to all its full possibilities ; only thus can man and woman move side by side as equals, no longer chained together by the fetters of love, while at heart they are enemies, fighting an endless fight. The question of property is not so easily solved. The author shows us, in various forms and under various conditions, how an eternal feud exists between the rich and the poor ; how money separates the dearest ; how it disturbs what might be the best and noblest relations of existence. The life of one of the heroes—a robber-chief—has been wrecked upon this rock ; for the woman he loved with all the best qualities of his nature spurned him for a richer husband. With passionate vehemence this man speaks out the reason why he has outlawed himself and revolted from the bonds of law.

‘ There was a time, a thousand—what know I ?—two thousand years ago, when mankind plundered and murdered one another as the wild-beasts do now. Then those children of Cain, who were sated with the blood of their brethren, came to an agreement among themselves and made laws. Since

that time those who have property live at the expense of those who have none.'

But he has broken with these laws, he has emancipated himself, and his speech, which is longer than we can quote, reflects one of the distinctive Slav characteristics, namely, the instinct of self-help, which, when it cannot find a legitimate outlet, seeks a perverted one. Indeed, before the year 1848, when Austria was reluctantly compelled to abolish the serfdom, these wretched men had no other champions than the brigands. Justice did not exist for them ; they were forced to endure it if their lords robbed them of their wives, cattle, and grain, or beat them remorselessly, sometimes to death ; and if they demurred they were subjected to every species of outrage. Nay more ; these persecuted men were not even suffered to invoke unmolested the protection of their only friend, their Father which is in heaven ; for these greedy nobles often went to the length of renting the parish-churches to the Jews, who obliged intending worshippers to pay admission at the door of God's house. Small wonder that the men with whom we come in contact in these pages either have all spirit crushed out of them, or—as is more often the case, for the Slav nature has Oriental buoyancy and irrepressibility—are inbred revolutionists, ready to revolt at the faintest excuse. The women are proud, strong, and beautiful ; and under their sheepskin

dressers beat hearts that often rival the Russian Empress Catherine in imperiousness, love of sway, and voluptuous passions. And as we read we breathe the arid mental air of the nobleman's house, situated in a lonely steppe or a petty provincial town, almost as remote from the haunts of men, and can conceive why gambling and acting the despot upon a small scale are their only diversions. We enter the squalid miserable home of his oppressed labourers, till lately his serfs, and still too often treated by him as such, and can comprehend why a stifling atmosphere of deadly hatred chokes the free passage of the air; and how it came about that when these men rose in revolt against their masters, they could calmly, as here depicted, bury them deep into the ground, and then mow down their proud inhuman heads with their scythes.

Galician Tales, *Count Donski*, and the *Emissary*, are some more of these striking books. The latter deals with the abortive revolution of 1848, and introduces us into the midst of the Polish nobles. We thus learn how conspiracies are for them merely diversions, undertaken upon the smallest provocation to break the monotony of their daily lives, justifying the proverb of the peasants concerning them—‘The Fatherland upon their tongues, and deceit in their hearts.’ Not the least remarkable is the author's latest work, which well merits the honour of translation into English. It is called

the *New Job* (*Der Neue Hiob*), and is the life-story of a Galician peasant, thus nicknamed because like his biblical prototype, he patiently endured much misfortune until his latter end, when he was blessed beyond the beginning.

Theophilus Pisarenko was born in 1794, in a winter even harder than is common in Galicia. Yet, nevertheless, his father baptised him a few hours after his birth in the brook that ran beside the house, after having first hacked open a hole in the ice. 'He has been born to suffer,' said the man, in answer to his wife's pleading for the infant; 'and he must be hardened betimes.' The little boy grew up sturdy and strong, and did honour to his stern initiation. Winter and summer he ran about bareheaded and barefooted; when he was six he already drove the cow and horse out to grass, imbibed such knowledge as his mother could impart to him from the Bible, refused staunchly to believe in superstitions and fairy tales, and pricked up his ears with interest whenever the name of General Bonaparte was mentioned. For rumours of Napoleon and his wars had reached even this remote village; and it was told how he had subdued kings, and said that there should be no more noblemen. The boy learnt full soon to regard aristocrats as the embodiment of all that was evil, the cause of all suffering; for did he not see his father forced to do menial services for their village lord, or worse

still, for his bailiff, who was a far more cruel despot than even his master dared to be? When Pisarenko was only ten he was forced to join in one of the abortive attempts made by the nobles to reconstitute the kingdom of Poland ; for even distant Galicia suffered from the after-waves of the French revolution that shook all Europe. The attempt ended in hardship, hunger, and thirst for the peasants, in disappointment for the nobles. At the age of twenty, Theophilus was impressed as a soldier. He bore his hard lot, which carried him away from his native land, its woods, and vast steppes, into the close imprisonment of a Viennese barrack, with the resignation of a true Slav. It was the time of the Great Congress, and the city on the Danube wore a festive dress. Pisarenko kept his eyes and ears well open ; he drank in all he heard, he tried to comprehend all he saw ; he learnt to understand the benefits of education, though such as was accorded to him was flogged into him in the most barbarous mode. But at last the fierce, devouring nostalgia of the Slav took hold of him ; he could bear it no longer, and fled away to his home in the vast, endless, monotonous plains. He did not know he was doing wrong ; he meant to come back, only he must breathe native air again, hear native sounds. Day and night he walked, till, exhausted and spent, he sank down upon his father's threshold, too weary even to open the door he had

so longed to pass again. All too soon he was put into irons as a deserter, and condemned first to death, and then, in acknowledgment of his otherwise good conduct, to run the gauntlet. He would not sue for mercy, and was forced to run till he dropped with exhaustion. Then the hospital had to receive him ; even when dismissed his strength was gone ; and at last he was discharged from the army as no longer of use. He came home to find his mother dead, his father dying.

By and by the open-air exercise of tilling the parental acres restored Pisarenko to health. He married an old playmate, Xenia ; and they were happy in their few possessions. Five years of peace and prosperity, and three blooming children were theirs. Then followed quickly, one upon another, heavy blows of fate. A dark strange cloud appeared one evening upon the horizon, drifting rapidly forwards, though there was no wind to impel it. It proved to be a cloud of locusts. Before morning the land was a desert ; and when harvest came round, barns and granaries were empty. Dearth followed of necessity, and famine trod upon its footsteps. The nobles would do nothing to help their serfs. Many fled into the forests, and became brigands ; but Pisarenko would not yield to such invitations. A hard winter succeeded, famine and wolves dominated and desolated the land. Pisarenko's wife, seeing her babe die at her breast, in her despair

kneeled before the wife of the proprietor, and implored her aid. She was answered with taunts. 'Are we to help you idlers and good-for-nothings?' was the heartless reply. 'If you have not enough wherewith to feed your children, why did you marry?' Pisarenko bore all with fortitude and patience, encouraging others, and selling the last rag which covered him for food for his babes. Then at last the Emperor of Austria sent aid to his starving subjects, but not before hundreds of them had perished. Scarcely was this trouble a little allayed than in May came the first European invasion of the cholera, to add to the miseries of this sorely-tried land, and Pisarenko was one of the first to suffer from its scourge; his wife and all his children were taken from him. 'The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord!' spoke the deeply-bowed Pisarenko, in the words of Job.

For months he continued to do his daily work bravely, sadly, until a summons reached him that he was to take domestic service in the castle, an unwelcome post, which soon proved to be a temptation of Joseph. The stately peasant had found favour in the eyes of a fair lady, and soon Joseph's fate, too, was his; he was dismissed with blows and contumely. Again he went on his way patiently. Soon after, his horses were ill; and when he was required to labour for his master, he could not

bring them. The master, who chose to believe that this illness was a subterfuge, insisted that the horses should be brought out. He then whipped the one till it dropped down dead, the other till he had lamed it, and then tethered Pisarenko himself to the plough ; and for five days the man had to draw it beneath a scorching sun. At last justice threatened to interfere ; but the landlord fed the commission of inquiry upon dainties and champagne, and the end was that the nobleman was politely admonished to be a little less hasty in future, and six zwanziger (about one shilling) were given to Pisarenko as compensation. Not long after, the landlord gave a picnic in the woods ; the ladies objected to sit upon the ground because of the ants, and Pisarenko and another peasant were simply commanded to go down upon all fours and furnish a seat for the ladies. In this attitude they had to remain a long time, while the party chatted on about frivolous themes, regardless of their living seats. Could degradation be carried further ?

At last a brigand, the champion of the oppressed, could bear no longer to see Pisarenko and his friends thus put upon. He complained to the governor of the province ; the landlord was severely censured, and Pisarenko received, to his amazement, 2000 gulden damages for his horses and his pains. Not knowing what to do with such a sum, he took it to the priest, and begged him to do

with it what he thought best, and then continued to do his daily work in resignation and faith in God.

So years passed ; and though not spared by his landlord, this worthy was careful not to impose too much upon his servant, though his mercies would be called by us atrocities. There came the insurrections of 1846 and 1848. When the peasants turned upon their masters, Pisarenko, with true Christian charity, saved from their fury the lady who had so cruelly misused him, and to whom his wife had once kneeled in vain. The deed was misconstrued by his fellows, gave rise to murmurs, and for a time they shunned him. Only one young girl, who had long secretly admired him, sought him out, and worked for him, and her he soon after married. A son had not long been born to them before the Austrians were forced to repeal the *robot*, *i.e.* the necessity that the peasants should labour unpaid for their lords ; and from that moment the fortunes of the land-folk mended. But Pisarenko had still to suffer much. A hailstorm utterly destroyed one harvest, his old house was burnt to the ground, the new one swept away by a flood, so that it was as though he should never advance, but must begin life over and over again. Illness of a peculiar and painful kind also afflicted him ; he could not work, eat, or sleep. It was then he received his sad nickname. ‘For is there a misfortune in the world that has not pursued this

man?' said the peasants; and his friends came and comforted him, after the manner of Job's. But he recovered, contrary to all expectations, and suddenly found himself rich too; in his eyes, as rich as Rothschild. For the priest brought him the money he had quite forgotten, and which had borne interest in all these years. Forthwith Pisarenko set about to carry out a darling wish, that of introducing improved agricultural implements into his village. At first mistrust and scoffs greeted his endeavours, but after a while others followed his example, and soon the whole country around improved. Further, Pisarenko sent his children to Vienna to school, that they might learn the best of everything, and at last he was forced to go to the capital himself, for the peasants pressed upon him that he must represent their province in Parliament. But the money received by the deputies to cover their expenses was not spent by this man upon himself. He lived at Vienna in frugality, almost in squalor, so that when he returned, it was a goodly sum that he had collected; and this sum he spent upon schools for his village and local improvements, and Sacher-Masoch avers that when he saw him last, in 1878, he was a hale man of eighty-four, happy and revered.

The story, of which this is a bald outline, is full of graphic power, while the character of the hero is a masterpiece of delineation. A rude unlettered

peasant, of a stern simplicity of character, Pisarenko supplied by mother wit what he lacked in education, and thus elevated his own condition, and that of his fellows, by peaceful, in lieu of violent, means. Both as a romance and an ethnographical study, this book is remarkable. It also throws some side-lights upon the vexed Eastern question, as well as, like all Sacher-Masoch's novels, upon the character of the Slavs.

And no less ably than he depicts character does this author depict scenery. The gloomy grandeur of the Carpathians, the endless ocean-like plains, stand forth in his pages ; and so also do the burning summers, the stern terrible winters, that are peculiar to Eastern Europe. We have only room to quote one of the word-pictures with which these pages abound. It is an account of a sledge-drive across the wintry plain.

The Sledge Ride.

He who has glided over the peaceful ocean in a light bark, and let the element play with him and the shadowy coast-lines of continent and island sink behind him, while he gazed into that second ocean of air with its heaving clouds, will easily understand me when I tell of the Galician plain, the wintry snow-ocean, the ride in the fleeting sledge. These two, the ocean and the plain, alike

attract the soul of man with melancholy longing. But the flight in the sledge is swifter, more eagle-like, while the boat rolls in the water like a duck in the air—only the colour of the endless plain and its melody are graver, gloomier, more threatening. We see Nature in her nakedness ; we feel the struggle for existence ; we feel Death nearer ; we perceive his atmosphere ; we hear his voice.

The clear winter afternoon had enticed me out.

The day was glorious ; the air seemed to stand still ; even the light, the golden sun-waves, did not tremble in the gentle mist that rose from the ground. Air and light were one element. In the village too all was still ; not a sound betrayed the inhabitants of the silent thatched cottages ; only the sparrows flew in flocks on to the hedges, and twittered.

Further on stood a little sledge to which a lame horse, no higher than a foal, was harnessed, and on it a peasant was bringing wood from the forest. His daughter, a girl not yet fully grown, called to him, and waded, with bare feet, through a yard's depth of snow, to pick up a little fagot that he had lost.

As we flew down the bare mountain-side with clear-sounding bells, there lay before us the plain, immeasurable, incomprehensible, endless. The wintry ermine lent it the highest majesty. It was

enveloped by it; only the bare stems of the stunted willows, further off single long-armed draw-wells, in the distance a few forlorn sooty huts, stood out black against the white snow-fur.

We flew along over the hard road.

Opposite lay a farmhouse; behind it a little village. The snow had silvered over everything; had covered with silver the wretched overhanging roofs, had adorned the little panes with silver flowers; and from every gutter, every pump, every crippled fruit-tree hung silver tassels. High walls of snow surrounded every dwelling; there man has been forced to scoop out for himself passages, like the badger or the fox. The light smoke that rises from the roof seems to freeze in the air. Tall silver poplars surround the farm. Here and there little grains of frost flutter into the air, and float through it like swarms of diamond gnats, a miniature thunderstorm, scattering a thousand little lightning-flashes.

At the end of the hamlet peasant-boys, with white heads and rosy cheeks, are tumbling about half naked in the snow. They are forming a man out of it, and they put a long pipe into his broad mouth, such as noblemen smoke. There sits a young peasant on a hand-sledge, and some pretty girls, with long brown plats and full white bodices, are drawing him along pellmell. The shouts of their buoyant spirits rise above them like a carol-

ling lark. How they laugh ! And he laughs even more wildly, and has lost his cap.

We flew past the wood.

Where is now its melody ? The fox barks hoarsely, and the daw shrieks. The bright-red foliage is swathed in one monotony of snow. A roseate watery atmosphere pervades wood and sky. Before us lie only snowy hills, like the frozen waves of a white sea. Where the white heavens dip into it there rests a lustre. Only that eye can behold it that can gaze into the sun. Behind us the village, the red wood, disappear ; the last summits of the bare mountains give forth one more ray of light ; then they also disappear like the hills and the solitary trees. The limitless plain has received us. Before us naught but snow ; behind us snow ; above us the white sky like snow ; around us the most intense solitude, death, silence.

We glided on as in a dream. The horses swam in the snow, the sledge followed noiselessly. Across the snow-field ran a little gray mouse. Far and wide not a chimney, not a hollow stem, not a mole-hill, was in sight ; and so it ran on with cautious earnestness. Whither ? Now it was only a little dark spot. Then again all around us was solitude. It was as though we made no progress. Nothing changed before us, nothing behind us ; not even the sky. It stands stiff, cloudless, colourless, as though newly washed with lime ; it does not move ;

it does not even glimmer. Only the air becomes more evening-like and sharper ; it cuts like glass.

Surely our sledge must be standing still like a vessel in the enchanted sea, that moves without leaving the spot. We only *believe* that we are driving—nothing before us, nothing behind us—just as we believe we live. For do we live? Does not to live mean to be? and to be no more, never to have been?

There flies a raven ; he pushes on powerfully with his dusky wings in silence, with open bill.

As the sun sets, it gradually becomes visible down below as a shining ball of mist. It does not set ; it sinks into the snow. It dissolves like molten gold ; golden waves play across to us ; wondrous colours run over the snow, which is sprinkled with liquid silver. Now it expires. The thousand lights which it has thrown out run together, become pale ; a light-red whiff yet floats in the air ; then it too dissolves ; and once more everything is colourless, cold, and motionless.

Only for a moment.

Then we meet a sudden icy gust from the east.

In the distance floated a sledge ; the fleeting waves of air carried the wailing sound of its bells across to us ; then it was consumed by the ashy fog, which, quickly rising on the horizon, gathered into a compact mass, and began to surge towards us. It became rapidly dark ; formless white-gray

clouds spanned the sky ; a terrible armada, sail upon sail. Now the wind strikes them and swells them ; they swim nearer, they approach us, and we drive into them. Evening mists spring up and dissolve into light shadows.

On we flew. The torn mists whirled around us like birds with large tired wings.

Already the wind is striking us in the neck with both fists ; it howls with horrible, lamentable, mad voices ; it leaps down from the height into the snow, tears it up, bursts the great clouds, scatters them to earth in flaky masses, and threatens to bury us under them. The horses drop their heads between their legs, and pant. The storm whirls up white clouds to the heavens, sweeps the plain with white broom, and forms immense heaps, in which it buries men, beasts, whole villages.

The air burns as though it were glowing hot ; it has become firm ; broken by the storm, it flies about in pieces, and penetrates like glass-splinters into the lungs when we take breath.

The horses can advance but slowly ; they dig their way through snow, air, and wind.

The snow has become an element in which we swim with all our might, so as not to be drowned ; we breathe it ; it threatens to burn us. In the most terrible commotion, Nature becomes fixed and icy. We ourselves are but part of the universal rigid cold. We can now conceive how the

ice holds a world entombed, how we may cease to live without death, without decay.

Thoughts are suspended in our brains like icicles ; the soul is wrapt in ice ; the blood falls like quicksilver. We no longer think our own thoughts, no longer feel as human beings feel.

Here is the struggle for existence ; but we fight, as the elements do, patiently, silently, resigned—almost indifferent. The life that we love so much is frozen ; we are a stone, a piece of ice—one more rigid bubble in the battle of the elements.

A white curtain separates us from our horses ; the sledge carries us through the storm like a boat without oar, without sail—it almost stands still.

The hurricane howls on monotonously, the air burns, the snow whirls, space and time vanish. Are we advancing ? Are we standing still ? Is it night—is it day ?

Slowly the clouds move towards the west. Slowly the horses pant again ; now they rise up, their backs covered with snow—thick flakes fall ; they lie piled on the earth a yard's height, but we can see again, and advance. The storm only gasps now, and, whining, rolls in the snow. The mists lie on the ground like gray ashes. Where are we ?

Round about everything has disappeared ; no road—not a rubbish-heap, not a wooden cross, to mark it. The horses wade up to their breasts ;

only in the distance a few solitary sounds of the storm. We stand, move, on our way again.

The horses shake themselves and go more quickly. Only light watery flakes fall now. But in the distance everything is still veiled. Again we halt and take counsel.

Night draws on ; dull cloudy twilight spreads over us, and enwraps us more and more.

A glowing-red streak is on the horizon. We turn towards it. It was as though the red moon had fallen on to the earth, and were being extinguished in the snow ; it flickered up, and illumined strong dark shadows.

‘It is the peasant-watch near the birch-wood,’ said the Jew ; ‘and behind the wood lies Tulawa.’

Such is this robust and original writer at his best. We regret to have to add that he is not always true to himself, does not always strive to attain to his own highest level. At intervals in his literary career he has abandoned the field that he has made his own, and in which he has so honourably distinguished himself, and has written a number of worthless books, the more worthless, and the more open to sharp censure, because he has shown us how much better things he can achieve. These books are of two kinds : historical novels and

novels of the *coulisse* that rival their French prototypes for flimsiness. Sacher-Masoch has no call for the former type of novel ; the second is, with him, clearly a clumsy imitation. Of late it would seem, however, that he has seen the error of his ways, and that he will continue and carry to a worthy conclusion his grandly-conceived cycle of stories, the *Legacy of Cain*.

FLYGARE-CARLEN.

BORN IN STRÖMSTAD, AUG. 8, 1807 ; NOW LIVING IN
STOCKHOLM.

FLYGARE-CARLEN.

EMILIE FLYGARE-CARLEN shares, with Frederike Bremer, a reputation that, thanks chiefly to German and English translations of their books, has extended beyond the narrow confines of their land and little-spoken language. Both have excelled in delineations of Swedish life, and awakened an interest in their distant northern home, which, from its geographical position and other causes, still seems so remote from our horizon, notwithstanding the fashion of Norwegian and Swedish tours that has recently sprung up. But the every-day tourist cares little for the language of the land he visits, and nothing for its literature. Thanks, however, to William and Mary Howitt, those industrious students of Teutonic and Scandinavian letters, Miss Bremer's works have become familiar in this country as household words. Madame Carlen's novels have also been translated, but more sparingly ; and yet the scenes to which she introduces us are no less typical of her country. Indeed, Madame Carlen's range of themes is far wider than that of her sister-novelist, who confines herself almost exclu-

sively, not only to domestic life, but also to the domestic life of a section of society—the higher middle class. She goes wider afield, and includes all sections, thus furnishing us with spirited descriptions of land and people, and making us acquainted with life among the peasants, the fishermen, the clergy, the custom-house officers, as well as among the burghers and the nobles.

This gifted and productive authoress was born at Strömstad, a small seaport on the confines of Norway, where her father, Roger Smith, was a merchant. In 1827 she married a country medical practitioner, Dr. Flygare. He died in 1833, leaving her in bad circumstances, with two little children. In order to eke out her slender income, it occurred to her to turn her active imagination to account. Novel-writing came naturally to her; already at school she had written romances, and her early training under her father had shown her many different sides of human life. For, thanks to him, she had received a practical education; and he had made her his companion on his frequent sea-journeys and business tours among the villages and towns of the land. Thus she acquired the exact knowledge of maritime life displayed in so many of her books, and learnt to know the ways and mode of thought of the people, especially of those who inhabit the rocky sea-fretted coast, and who live largely by smuggling. For some years after her husband's

death, Madame Flygare led a wandering life, visiting different parts of Sweden, and extending her acquaintance with the land and people. Her first work, published anonymously, appeared in 1838, and attracted some notice. After its publication she came to Stockholm, where she soon after married a Swedish author and lawyer, J. E. Carlen.

From this time until 1852, when she lost a promising son, Madame Carlen produced a large number of works. They are not by any means of equal merit, but all are distinguished by fidelity to nature, by a pure high-minded tone, by considerable powers of description, and an agreeable style. Their author shows much invention and some skill in the management of plots, a delicate perception, sound judgment, and a belief in the existence and ultimate triumph of good. The characters are true to human nature, and consistent in their development, showing a sound acquaintance with the human heart. The action is brisk and dramatic, and over all is spread the subtle charm of local colour. Madame Carlen's novels are full of national life, and help to make us acquainted with the Swedes. Among the best may be named *Gustav Lindorm*, *A Night at the Lake of Buller*, *The Rose of Tistletön*, *One Year*, *The Professor*, *The Merchant House among the Islands*. We have chosen our extract from the latter story. It recounts one of those often desperate encounters between the

revenue officers and the fishermen who drive an illicit trade, that recur in Madame Carlen's pages, and are too graphically narrated not to have been taken from life.

After pausing for some years, Madame Carlen, in 1858, once more resumed her pen. In 1862 the Swedish Academy did her the honour to award her their gold medal, an undoubted acknowledgment of the esteem with which she is regarded in her native land. On the whole, her later novels have not attained the standard of her earlier ones ; but all are readable, and in many she touches upon burning questions of the day. In Stockholm she is a well-known figure, and until the death of her second husband her house was a centre of literary interests. This event occurred in 1875, and since that time Madame Carlen has retired completely from the world. She is still living, and a few years ago published her autobiography, a rambling, chatty, egotistical memoir, pleasant to read, but of no enduring worth.

The Smugglers.

When the Custom-house yacht had come as near to the edge of the boat as it could without showing its mast, the commander lay-to near a rock. Immediately after he mounted on to the holm with his telescope, took up his post behind a large stone, and directed his gaze to the boat, which was gently

drifting along with the current. He now noticed two men, who were occupied, probably with the cargo. He was not mistaken in his supposition. Gudmar continued to watch their movements, which he did not understand. And he really saw a great many things while watching there.

The lieutenant had remained at his post about three-quarters of an hour, and the boat had been carried close to the little insignificant Mermaid cliff, when he suddenly saw the men seize their oars, and row quickly across the small intervening space. Soon after a still more remarkable circumstance attracted his whole attention.

On the little fore-deck there now appeared a third man, who could still less be one of the Esbjörnssons. Gudmar saw him speak to the man whom he took for Ragnar, and after a time, as the boat glided to the edge of the cliff, he saw him spring to shore, and disappear behind a rock that hid him from sight. The lieutenant now assumed as certain that the celebrated cave in this cliff was to be the place of deposit for the cargo, and fancied that an attempt had been made to play one of the tricks on him that so often occur in the experience of a Custom-house officer. He expected they would let him find the boat when it was already empty.

‘Well,’ thought he, ‘I know where to find it now, and I will not annoy the boat by making a search.’

But his idea was soon relinquished ; for, to his great surprise, the boat went on again at once without landing anything except the man, and the smugglers continued their dreary way across the still waters.

Gudmar now thought that he might go below for a time, and ordered Sven to keep watch in his place, and to inform him at once if anything else of importance should occur.

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Sven Dillhufvud entered with the information that a little skiff had come into sight, in which were three men, two at the oars and one seated behind.

Gudmar hastened back to his former post of observation. His telescope was now directed towards the new object. Through its excellent glass he could watch, without himself being seen, the very curious and suspicious movements of the skiff, which seemed as though it did not care to reveal any acquaintance with the boat, and yet was always moving gradually towards it, while the crew on the smuggling-boat did not make the least sign of recognition. On both sides a neutral indifference was observed, while each party was on the look-out for 'dangerous eyes' among the bays. And where could the dangerous eyes be but on the Custom-house yacht, which they seemed at last convinced must be engaged in some other expedition. Now the rower in the little boat was seen to rise, and, as

though by chance, fan his hot face with his red handkerchief.

‘God help me!’ exclaimed Gudmar, ‘is not that Olagus Esbjörnsson?’

Meantime he had seen that the signal given by the red handkerchief was answered from the smugglers’ boat by a gentle flutter of Ragnar’s yellow handkerchief. This exchange of signals probably imported a question on the one hand as to the safety of the road, and an affirmative answer on the other, for now the little skiff was quickly rowed towards the boat, and anchored next its stern-post. A few minutes later the great men of Mörkö had gone on board with their third man, and the little skiff had to float along behind in the dead water.

Immediately after, four oars flashed up in the light of the setting sun. The chief of the tall men himself took the oar of the boat.

Gudmar had seen enough. He hastily closed his telescope. There was something more than mere watching to be done now.

The lieutenant’s first hasty command, after he had sprung down again, was,

‘Sven, go up quickly! That cloud will soon bring them wind. They are rowing in this direction, and mean to sail round the point. Tell me when they are only a few hundred yards off.’

Sven hastened thither. He began to feel a breath of the Berserker spirit rising in him. The

lieutenant himself put the priming in the little cannons; then fetched his gun, and kept it in his hand.

‘Now, sir,’ announced Sven, who came hurriedly back—‘now I think it is time.’

Once more the lieutenant hurried up the cliff and down again.

‘Quick, boys, quick, to work—off! Out with your oars, and row past the point as quietly as possible.’

Soon the yacht, as light as a floating reed, had accomplished this course, and the two boats were brought face to face. The smugglers, in their security, noticed nothing until the sense of hearing aroused all the other senses. For the lieutenant had taken the match which lay ready, and fired a shot to hail the boat.

Olagus at the rudder, and the four others at their oars, started up and rose. A single cry of rage escaped the lips of the mighty man; it sounded deep and dull, and the cliffs returned the echo.

‘Pull in your oars!’ exclaimed the commander of the Custom-house yacht. ‘Stop before the royal flag! I mean to examine what you are carrying.’

‘Go to the deepest hell, you dog of a Custom-house officer!’ roared Olagus. ‘You may thank my kindness that I merely befool you.’

Thereupon he thundered his command to his companions :

‘Row, row as fast as you can to the open sea !’

And, as though it had invisible wings, the boat turned and shot forward.

‘Halt, halt !’ cried the lieutenant, whose blood was now up. ‘In the name of his Majesty and of the Crown, down with the sails !’

Loud laughter from the smugglers’ boat sounded across the water.

This scornful laughter was answered from the yacht by the firing of the second cannon, which was fully loaded. The ball fell into the water close to the windward of the boat.

The answer was renewed laughter from the smugglers’ boat, whose crew, urged by the twofold desire to save their cargo and make fools of the Custom-house officers, continued to increase the distance between themselves and the yacht. In spite of the more skilful guidance, the two oars of the latter could not overtake the four men. But the lieutenant’s full strong voice could still be heard :

‘Stop, or I will shoot you to the bottom !’

But he did not shoot, for the smugglers’ boat was already out of the reach of shot.

At this moment it would have been impossible to detect the least trace of the amiable good-natured Gudmar Guldbrandsson, the favourite of

all the ladies, with his light-yellow curls and his slightly-arched forehead, and the beautiful dark-blue eyes, which, when not enlivened by the power of some passion, sometimes revealed that half-dreamy expression that women so often admire.

Majke ought to have seen her commander now, as he stood for a moment on the deck, leaning on his gun, his glass in his hand.

‘Row, boys, row with all your might! I will not allow—’ The remainder of the sentence was lost in inarticulate tones.

Once more he raised the glass to his eyes.

The chase lasted some time, without any increase of the intervening distance, or any hope of its diminution. It was a grave, a terrible chase.

Meantime new and strange intentions had occurred to the commander of the smugglers’ boat. From what dark source could he have received the inspiration that dictated the command?

‘Knock out the bung of the top brandy-barrel, and let us drink; that will refresh our courage and rejoice our hearts. Be merry and drink as long as you like.’

And now ensued a wild bacchanalia. The men drank out of large mugs, they drank out of cans, and the result was not wanting, while the boat was nearing the entrance to the sea.

‘Now, my men,’ began Olagus, in powerful penetrating tones, as he stroked his reddish beard,

‘shall we allow one of those government fools to force us to go a different way from the one we ourselves wish to go?’

‘Olagus,’ Tuve ventured to interpose—for Tuve still possessed full consciousness, as he had only made a pretence of drinking—‘dear Olagus, let us be content if we can place the goods in safety. I think I perceive that you mean something else—something dangerous.’

‘Coward! You ought to sit at home and help your father weave nets. If you are afraid, creep under the tarpaulin; there are others here who do not get the cramp when they are to follow the Mörkö bears.’

‘For my part,’ thought Börje, as he bent over his oar, ‘I should like to keep away from this hunt. But who dare speak a word? I feel as though I were already in the fortress, the ship and crew in the service of the crown.’

Perhaps Ragnar thought so too; but the great man was so much feared that when he commanded no contradiction was ever heard.

It was almost the first time that Tuve had made an objection, and his brother’s scornful rebuke had roused his blood also, but still he controlled himself.

What was resolved on meantime will be seen from what follows.

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‘Why, what is that?’ exclaimed the lieutenant of the yacht. ‘The oars are drawn in! He is turning,—on my life, he is turning!’

‘He knew that we should catch him up,’ said Sven, delighted once more to be able to indulge in his usual humour. ‘Fists and sinews like mine are worth as much as four of them; and if we take Pelle into account, they might easily recognise that the best thing they can do is to surrender at once.’

‘Silence, you conceited idiot!’ commanded the lieutenant; ‘this is no matter of parley. He is making straight for us. The wind is falling, it is becoming calm.’

‘What does the lieutenant think, Pelle?’ asked Sven, in a loud whisper. ‘Can Olagus have weapons on board, and want to attack us?’

‘It almost looks like it,’ answered Pelle shortly.

Meantime the two boats approached one another with alarming speed.

‘Whatever happens,’ said the lieutenant, with icy calm, ‘and the game looks suspicious, you know, my friends, that the coastguardsman may not look behind him. The flag of the crown may wave over living or dead men; that is no matter so long as it does not wave over one who has not done his duty.’

‘Yes,’ answered Pelle.

Sven spread out his arms in a significant gesture.

‘They may be excited by drink, their copper-coloured faces show that; but here stands a man who will not forget that his name is Sven Dillhufvud. There, I have spoken! But, dear sir, do take care of yourself. They have torn up the boards, and are fetching up stones and pieces of iron.’

‘Yes, I see. If they attack us, take care of the oars. Do not lay-to on the long side; but row past, and then turn. If they throw, watch their movements carefully; in that way you can escape the danger.’

The boats, which were only a few fathoms apart, glided gently towards one another.

The lieutenant’s command was punctually executed by his people.

‘Olagus Esbjörnsson,’ exclaimed the commander of the Custom-house yacht, ‘I charge you once more in the king’s name to surrender!’

‘O dear yes,’ exclaimed the worthy descendant of the Vikings. ‘I have come back just with that intention. Perhaps I also wanted to fulfil an old vow. Do you remember what I vowed that night by the Oternnest?’

At the same moment a whole shower of pieces of iron whistled through the air, and fell rattling on to the yacht; but the sharp piece of iron thrown by Olagus’s own hands was aimed at the lieutenant himself. He, however, darted aside so quickly that

he was not wounded, although it flew so close past him that it tore off his straw hat and dashed it into the sea.

‘Olagus, and you others,’ sounded his voice, in all its youthful power, ‘consider what you do ; consider the price of an attack on a royal boat and crew ! The responsibility may cost you dear. I charge you to cease at once.’

‘What ! Are you frightened, you crown slaves ?’ roared Olagus, whose sparkling eyes and flushed face, so different from his usual calm in peaceful circumstances, lent increased wildness to his form and gestures. ‘Come, will this warm you ?’ And at the same moment another piece of iron flew past, aimed with such certainty, that it would have cut off the thread of the lieutenant’s life if he had not taken shelter behind the mast. The iron was firmly fixed in the mast.

The yacht was now bombarded on all sides. Here hung a torn sail, there an end of rope, and the side planks had already received a good deal of injury, so that the yacht was threatened with a leak. But now was heard for the last time the young commander’s warning.

‘Stop, Olagus, and tell your people to put aside their wretched arms ; for, on my life, this gun is loaded with a ball, and the first of you who throws another piece shall be shot down like a stag.’

‘Do it if you dare ! But there, see, miserable

Custom-house dog, how the Mörkö Bears respect your threats !

The third piece of iron was just about to be thrown; but at the same moment the lieutenant took aim.

The shot was fired.

During the long chase and the attack which followed it, the sun had been approaching the horizon, and now might be seen one of those beautiful sunsets which so often delight the eye on this blue-green sea. They are the counterpart of the autumn apparitions during the dark fogs, when the ships wander about, seeking their way among the cliffs, then glimmering whitely, and now shining red.

Worthy the inspiration of poet and painter, this warm, divinely peaceful, and lovely scene of Nature offered a new bitter contrast to the terrible picture which human passion and the claims of duty had conjured with lightning speed into these two spots in the sea—the smugglers' boat and the Custom-house yacht.

The shot was fired, and the mighty giant of Mörkö, Olagus Esbjörnsson, sank back into the tarpaulin.

‘The accursed devil has shot right into my heart !’

Pale as death, Tuve sprang forward, and wanted to stay the blood.

‘Leave it alone,’ panted Olagus. ‘It is no use. Give my love to father and Britje, she was a good wife. You must be a father to—my boy. The business may cease.’

The subduing touch of death had already extinguished the wild light which the fire of hatred had kindled in these eyes. And the last glance that sought his brother’s gaze was gentle.

Suddenly he was once more fired by the remembrance of the earthly life which was fast retreating from him.

‘Quickly away with the cargo! No one must know that Olagus Esbjörnsson fell from a shot out of the Custom-house yacht. I—I—fell upon them.’

They were his last words.

Tuve’s head fell, sobbing, on the man whom he had so completely honoured as his superior.

Tuve was now the first in Mörkö, and, as though a stronger spirit had come over him, he began to feel his duty. He rose, and gave orders to turn towards the sea, but the crew stood motionless with terror.

CHERBULIEZ.

BORN IN GENEVA, JULY 1829 ; NOW LIVING IN PARIS.



CHERBULIEZ.

SWITZERLAND, as well as France, may be permitted to claim Cherbuliez as her son, for he was born in Geneva. His ancestors, staunch Protestants, came thither from Dauphiné, whence they fled on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and making Geneva their second home, distinguished themselves in connection with its political and literary life. One of them was a chief of the faction of the *Natifs* who warred against the old Patrician families, and an intimate of Voltaire ; another assisted De Saussure in his first scientific exploration of Mont Blanc. André Cherbuliez, the father of our novelist, was a professor of philology at the Geneva Academy. He married a pastor's daughter, a gifted woman, with a talent for painting ; and Victor was their only son. A friend of the family has said that the son learnt from the father those things which can be learnt, from the mother those which cannot be learnt. He received a most careful education, both at school and at home. At the age of twenty, a legacy left to him for the purpose, enabled him to travel and see the world. He went

first to Paris, where he remained a year and a half, and continued to study, among other matters, Oriental languages, in which he attained a respectable proficiency. He then went to Bonn, where he devoted himself to German philosophy, Sanskrit, and Greek, and passed thence to Frankfort, Weimar, and Berlin, in all of which cities he endeavoured to assimilate their intellectual wealth. After a three years' absence he returned to Geneva, and began to earn his livelihood as a tutor. He was offered a post at the Gymnasium, and also the tutorship to a German prince, but declined both. He did not wish to bind himself irrevocably to any career, for he was bitten with the love of letters. With regard to the prince, he refused because, as he said, he at least had this resemblance with D'Alembert, that he chose to be a slave to his liberty.

At the age of twenty-seven Cherbuliez contracted a love-marriage with a Swiss lady, Mdlle. Charlotte Rochaix. In 1860 he and his wife visited Smyrna, where Cherbuliez's sister was married. Here they spent ten months, making acquaintance with the East, Cherbuliez at the same time delivering a course of lectures on the history of French novels since 1815. On the return journey, Pergamos, the Troad, Athens, and Constantinople were visited. While crossing to Trieste Cherbuliez conceived the idea of his first work, *Le Cheval de Phidias*, for which Plato's *Symposium* served as his model. This first

attempt is a humorous archæological essay—a rambling æsthetic dialogue concerning art, starting from a horse modelled by Phidias and ranging over all the domains of plastic art. The work attracted much notice ; it was especially praised by St.-Beuve, while George Sand not only wrote to its author to express her admiration, but obtained an introduction for him to the editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, who at once invited Cherbuliez to contribute to its pages.

His first contribution to this paper of European fame, with which Cherbuliez was destined to become intimately connected, was the *bizarre* novel of *Comte Kostia*, a work which, according to the editor's statement, was one of the most successful the *Revue* had published. It was written in 1862 ; and Cherbuliez has thus carried out Jean Paul's axiom, that no one should write a novel before he had turned thirty, and had gained something of the 'philosophic mind,' which, as Wordsworth tells us, comes with years and experience. Though now attracted so powerfully to Paris, Cherbuliez for a time continued to live at Geneva, though he roamed much between this date and 1874, when he ultimately left it. In 1863 he visited Rome, and studied the history of the Renaissance ; next year he wandered through Dauphiné, in which is laid the scene of his *Roman d'une Honnête Femme*. A short time after he spent some months in Florence. At

the desire of the *Revue*, before the outbreak of the war, Cherbuliez visited Germany, studying its political circumstances, and writing essays thereupon, which were republished, in book form, as *L'Allemagne Politique après la Paix de Prague*. For the same journal and purpose he also passed some time at Madrid.

The death of Cherbuliez's father snapped the last link which bound him to Geneva. He settled permanently in Paris, where his now intimate connection with the *Revue* required his constant presence. He had become editor besides contributor, and not only novels and political studies, but clever satires on affairs and things German, written under the pseudonym of G. Valbert, are from his pen. For he is a versatile writer, a man of many gifts, who has exercised them in all directions. It is as a novelist that he concerns us here, and as such it would be difficult to overrate his ability: for mere cleverness he exceeds all living French authors. His flexible and vivacious style is perfect of its kind—every sentence is an epigram. There is, perhaps, almost too much *esprit*; for, owing to this, and the fact that an effort after originality is a little too visible, the sentiment, and at times even the reality, suffers. As a writer, Cherbuliez amuses, interests, delights, and surprises; but his readers remain unmoved, and think more of the author than of his personages. He rarely, if ever, carries us

away, or ventures into the realms of passion. His analysis is accurate ; he is an admirable psychological observer, a finished writer, an accomplished narrator ; but he has in him no vein of the poet. Perhaps this may result from the influence of our age, which is adverse to sentiment ; for in the *Roman d'une Honnête Femme* and in *Comte Kostia* imagination, romance, and emotions worthy the name come more into play than in his later lightly cynical works. His animosity against the Germans has prompted some of his most characteristic productions. *Meta Holdenis* is a sort of foreign Becky Sharp, ingratiating herself wherever she goes, seeming to be a model of feminine virtue and unselfish devotion, but never for an instant, except once, losing sight of her ultimate aim, her own worldly advancement. That she does lose sight of it once, for an instant, shows that the Frenchman possessed a keener insight into feminine character than Thackeray. *Samuel Brohl et Cie.* is a companion picture of a masculine adventurer, painted in blacker colours, and without extenuating touches. The plan of the story is so hopelessly disagreeable that not all the ability of its narrator can redeem it ; and on this account it must remain in the second rank, as a picture admirably painted, but which it was, perhaps, a pity to paint at all. The hero, a German Jew, personates a deceased acquaintance of his, a young Polish count, and as such makes

acquaintance in the Engadine with a French heiress and her father. The heiress falls in love with him, and they become engaged. Some of her friends suspect the nobility of the Count Larinski ; and the story tells how gradually his imposture becomes disclosed, and how, at the eleventh hour, the heroine is saved from giving her hand to an adventurer whose base origin and infamous character have been known to the reader all along. There is nothing great or exciting in the story ; it is coldly realistic. Samuel Brohl, alias Count Larinski, is a low villain, whose abject nature betrays itself athwart his most careful efforts to play the hero of romance. The heroine is a slightly strong-minded, slightly obstinate, slightly obtuse young lady ; and though we rejoice in her eventual rescue from the arms of the scoundrel she has never suspected, we feel as if some taint were already incurred by her lengthened engagement to the disgraceful being, who is, moreover, the figure in whom the whole interest of the story centres. The want of some pleasant counterfoil to the hero is painfully evident ; for this is not sufficiently supplied by an exemplary French cousin, to whom Meta is ultimately awarded, but who, in the novel, plays a secondary part. Cherbuliez may claim that *Samuel Brohl* is true to nature ; but its strength consists in the fact, which is a weakness in itself, that it relies

for its material on what is deformed, degraded, tainted, and corrupt in human nature.

In a short story, 'Les Inconséquences de M. Drommel,' Cherbuliez has again had his fling at the Germans. The story, which satirises German pedantry, is purely humorous. The picture drawn of the member for Görlitz, blindly stupid, arrogant, selfish, and inconceivably ignorant, is merely amusing. *Paule Merle* and *Le Roman d'une Honnête Femme* are both psychological studies of the female heart. It is in his heroines that Cherbuliez betrays Teutonic influences. The majority of his women are unmarried, and by no means bear the true French stamp. The typical *jeune fille* of French novelists is conspicuous by her absence in his pages. His heroines are individual characters that will think and feel for themselves. They are cultivated like Isabelle (*Roman d'une Honnête Femme*), eccentric or wilful like Stéphanie (*Comte Kostia*), or self-reliant like Meta. Something of the English idea, which allows of a little more development of character in young unmarried females, seems to enter into his conceptions, and with decided advantage to his stories, which are not, therefore, entirely dependent upon matrimonial complications.

Cherbuliez is an ingenious skilful writer, of delicate perception, and full of subtleties of expression. In some forcible scenes he rises to the level of the

occasion, but it would not be easy to find a second writer so gifted, and yet such a stranger to pathos or any strong emotion. He never appeals to the heart, but invariably to the head, and here is unsurpassed. His strong points are character-drawing and analysis; and on these, and his art of writing, he relies rather than on elaborate plots and mystifications, knowing he can afford to despise these cheap ways of securing his readers' attention. Of his many novels, *L'Idée de Jean Têterol* may perhaps be pronounced as his most perfect work, although the tone of some of his earlier novels is more pleasing. It is original, well-proportioned, and well and equably carried out; all but the end, which is unfortunately puerile. The leading idea is the opposition and ultimate reconciliation of old and new France, typified in a *nouveau riche* and a nobleman. We have chosen our extracts from this work. Between the first and second passage Jean Têterol has grown rich, has acquired part of the baron's land, harries him in all conceivable manners, and finally buys up his debts, offering to release him on the condition of a marriage between his son and the baron's daughter. The young people are unacquainted with the bargain.

L'Idée de Jean Téterol.

I.

Small things have sometimes great results. Some men are so constituted that trivial incidents, hardly worth relating, produce on them an indelible impression, whose remembrance they will always retain. They fancy they hear heaven or the devil calling them, and they set out to go whither fate may lead them.

On the 2d September 1833, about the middle of the morning, the Baron of Saligneux, clad in a dressing-gown of apple-green silk, his hands in his pockets, left his study to take a turn in his garden. The Baron of Saligneux, known for ten leagues around under the name of Baron Adhémar, possessed in the canton of Saligneux, situated on the borders of Bugey and Bresse, a beautiful castle that his ancestors had bequeathed to him, and he also possessed fields, vines, woods, and meadows, more than two hundred *hectares* held by one proprietor. He occupied himself in managing his affairs, cultivating his fields, having his eye on everything, answerable only to himself, rather respected than beloved by all his people. The baron was considered to be somewhat severe, to have rather rough manners: yet there were means of approaching him; it was only necessary to bend the back before him, and to speak to him bare-

headed. All of his servants who followed this plan were well off, but there are some stiffnecks, some hard and proud foreheads, to whom all abasement is repugnant. The baron had for under-gardener a boy of eighteen called Jean Têterol, who either could not or would not procure his good-will. This boy had been a foundling, he had been picked up on the high-road. He was named Têterol because this name seemed to be written on a piece of paper sewn to his swaddling-clothes. He was fed and brought up by public charity, which, to tell the truth, did not do much for him ; he was allowed to grow up neglected, and perhaps he would have turned out badly if the young *curé* of Saligneux, who possessed all the virtues of an old *curé*, had not taken some interest in the child. He sent for him, questioned him, was struck by his open mind and his lively intelligence. He decided to keep him ; he taught him to read and write and cipher. Abbé Miraud was fond of gardening, and he gave Jean Têterol lessons in that art ; and some years later he found a place for him with Baron Saligneux, who only consented to retain him in his service out of regard for the priest's recommendation. Jean Têterol's face did not please the baron, and he by no means appreciated his ways of proceeding. He complained of his being reserved, absorbed in his own thoughts, taciturn, sullen. 'There is never any knowing,' said he, 'whether this boy is your friend or your enemy,

or rather he is neither one nor the other ; he is an eternal stranger.' Most of all, he resented the boy's iron head and inflexible back. The baron was most tenacious of respect, and Jean Têterol was not by nature respectful. He had come into the world with the idea that a baron of the old stamp and a foundling child were of about equal value, that they were formed out of the same clay. Whoever could have put that into his head ?

Baron Adhémar de Saligneux, dressed in an apple-green silk dressing-gown, his hands in his pockets, was walking in his garden, when he perceived Jean Têterol occupied in pruning a pear-tree. The antipathy that this foundling child inspired in him increased every day ; for some time he had been incessantly watching him, in the hope of catching him at some fault ; but it was not easy to catch Jean Têterol in fault. This taciturn fellow, who at the end of his career became almost talkative, was an indefatigable worker, sleeping little, rising early, industrious, diligent, conscientious. Goethe has said that 'for mediocre intellects a trade will always be a trade, that for superior intellects it is an art, and that a really great man in doing one thing does all, or rather he sees in this one thing that he does well the symbol of all the good work in the world.' Jean Têterol did well all that he did ; not that he cared about pleasing his employers or gaining their praise, but he cared a great deal about pleasing

Jean Têterol, who was not easily satisfied with himself.

The baron approached Jean, and watched him working for a moment ; then, knitting his brows, he began to upbraid him with not knowing how to set about it.

‘You are crippling my pear-tree!’ exclaimed he. ‘Leave your stupid pruning-knife, and go at once to fetch me the shears. I will teach you your work.’

Jean quietly answered that he knew his work, and that in certain cases the knife was better than the shears. Perhaps he was right, for we should not despise pruning-knives ; but a baron who is in the wrong gets angry, and that is exactly what happened to Baron Adhémar de Saligneux. He indignantly apostrophised the foundling-child, called him insolent and conceited, and informed him that there is nothing in the world more ridiculous than conceit that has been picked up under a cabbage. Jean at first listened to him in silence ; presently, his patience being exhausted, he began softly to hum the air of ‘Marlborough.’ It was the only song he had ever learnt, and he liked to sing it. Unfortunately his voice was false, and as he always applied himself thoroughly to whatever he did, he sang false with method and with delight. At the present moment his false voice shocked the baron less than his insolence. Boiling over with

anger, he raised his hand against the youth, who made a bound to one side, and succeeded in avoiding the blow. But he could not prevent the baron's foot from being as agile as his arm ; this foot struck him in the pit of the stomach, and sent him back against the pear-tree. When he had recovered his equilibrium he turned, picked up his cap that had fallen down, gave the baron a look from terrible eyes filled with tears of rage, then suddenly he took to his legs, scampered away, and disappeared.

Jean Têterol no longer knew where he was. He saw the whole world in the light of his adventure, and the whole world seemed to him changed. The sun, the fields, the woods, the steeple of Saligneux, had a different aspect from any they had had before. The fields, the steeple, the sun, had seen that kick, and they made their own reflections on the occurrence. He went to hide his shame in the depths of an impenetrable thicket, where he spent two hours biting his fists. He was pondering resolutions and thoughts, each more extravagant than the last. The first was to go and set fire to the castle ; the second was to await the Baron de Saligneux at a turn in the road, and to break his bones. He lopped off a branch of holly for a stick, and examined it with satisfaction. However, gradually his brain grew calmer. There were few things he believed in ; but he did believe

in courts of justice, in policemen, and he had made up his mind never to meddle with them. He said to his stick,

‘No, not that. I will find something better.’

And he resolved that this stick, which was convenient to carry, should not serve him for killing, but that he would make it his companion. Then he looked at an old oak which was watching him, and called on it to witness that one day Jean Têterol would teach the Baron de Saligneux manners. He pronounced this vow in a vibrating tone, and the oak seemed touched. All strong men have commenced by a Hannibal vow.

He secretly reëntered the mansion, took his clothes and his papers, and made a packet of them. Then he broke the money-box where he kept his pence, of which he was very careful, and having added them up, he was well-pleased with the result. After that he departed, never to return. Arrived at the gate, he took off his shoes, and struck the two shoes, bound with iron-work, violently against each other, to shake off all the dust that they might have collected on the property of Baron Saligneux. He spent the rest of the day seeking information, and procuring a knapsack, into which he stuffed his possessions and a leather purse, in which he put his pence. He spent the night in the open air, stretched out beside a ditch under a bush. He slept deliciously, and woke up fresh and ready,

feeling in himself the power to brave cold, hunger, thirst, and all the trials that awaited him.

Abbé Miraud was coming out of his church, where he had said Mass, when he saw Jean Têterol approaching him, his knapsack on his back, his holly-stick in his hand.

‘Why, what is the matter?’ said he. ‘What is the meaning of all this array?’

Jean did not answer. Abbé Miraud seized his arm.

‘Jean, that is not right,’ said he. ‘I know that you had a scene with M. de Saligneux.’

‘Do you know,’ exclaimed Jean, ‘that he lifted his hand and his foot against me, addressing me as a foundling-child? I did not feel my hand on his face, but I felt his foot here, do you see? And I feel it still, and I always shall feel it, and what he said will always remain here,’ putting his hand to his ear.

‘M. de Saligneux is a little hasty,’ replied the good priest, ‘but you took his reproaches badly; you were insolent.’

‘Let him meddle with his own affairs. He shall not teach me how to prune a pear-tree!’

‘At any rate he can teach you to be polite. You must be respectful to your superiors, my child. Ah, fie! while he was talking to you, you dared to hum the air of “Marlborough.”’

‘Excuse me, sir, I know no other,’ answered the young man, laughing.

Abbé Miraud assumed a severe expression. ‘Jean,’ said he, ‘either I take no further interest in you, or you make your peace with the baron.’

‘Never!’ replied Jean.

‘Do you not know that the Gospel teaches us to pardon insults? I admit that the baron was quite in the wrong; forgive him.’

‘Never!’ replied Jean, rubbing his sides.

“Never” is not a Christian word,’ replied the priest sadly; ‘it is hardly a human word. And,’ as Jean was silent, ‘what do you mean to do?’

‘Quit the country.’

‘And where are you going?’

‘Ah, that is my secret. I have my own idea,’ said Jean, raising his chin.

‘Wicked fool that you are,’ retorted the abbé, ‘very rich your idea will make you! This gentleman has an idea! Does it nourish you, that idea of yours? does it keep you warm? does it fill your stomach? and does it prevent you from dying of hunger?’

‘No matter; I have my idea,’ replied Jean.

‘I fear it is a bad one. Take care; there are ideas that lead to the hospital; there are ideas that lead straight to the penitentiary.’ And, looking fixedly at him, the priest added, ‘I really believe you have the devil in your eyes.’

‘God or the devil,’ said he, ‘no matter. I believe in neither God nor devil, sir. Ah, well, wherever I go I will promise to be honest ; it is only fools that are not ; and besides, if ever I felt a desire to steal, I should think of your old hat and your old threadbare cassock, and that will prevent me from putting my hand into other people’s pockets. But you must not ask me to believe in God or the devil. If there were a God, I should not have been picked up under a cabbage ; and if there were a devil, he would long ago have carried off Baron Saligneux and his accursed castle ; but as for stealing, that is not my idea, not that. I promise you, sir, never to steal.’

‘Your servant, Lord Jean Têterol, with your idea !’ exclaimed the priest. Then pulling from his pockets two crowns, worth five francs each, he slipped them into his hand. Jean hesitated to accept them ; however, he bethought himself, and said, ‘Thank you.’ Thereupon he started on his journey. Abbé Miraud followed him with his eyes a few minutes and saw him depart, stirring up the dust of the high-road, his holly-stick in his hand, his knapsack on his back, and his idea in his head.

In truth Jean Têterol’s idea was still a little confused. It was only a ‘thereabouts,’ an embryo. He had discovered that there are two sorts of men—the rich and the poor ; that the former are able to give kicks, and the latter to receive

them. What he also knew for a fact was that the day before he had received one, and that some day he would return it to him who had given it. Yes, some day Jean Têterol would be rich, even richer than Baron Saligneux, and he would take his revenge, and then there would be something worth seeing. What would it be? He did not know, but assuredly those who had good eyes should see something. The chief thing was to become rich. How? He had promised his village priest not to steal; he reckoned on growing rich by work; he had for some time noticed that in two hours he could do more work than others in a whole day, and that his work was better done than theirs. At what should he work? On this point he was also in doubt, and he waited for an inspiration to come to him. But he had heard that Paris is one of the places in the world where large fortunes are made, and he had taken it into his head to go to Paris; and it was to Paris that he went, asking the passers-by the way to Paris, living on crusts and water, sleeping on straw and in the open air, humming the air of 'Marlborough,' and conversing with his idea, which answered him.

II.

Lionel Têterol had not closed his eyes on his journey, and the round of the property had kept him on foot for seven consecutive hours. He was

very tired when he went to bed. In spite of the preoccupation of his thoughts, and the trouble they caused him, he had scarcely laid his head on his pillow before he fell fast asleep, and slept without waking till morning. On waking, however, he found, beneath his bolster, his thoughts awaiting him : they are always awaiting us.

He rose and dressed. Having completed his toilette, which was a speedy operation, he spent a whole hour looking out of the window. The country, like himself, had just awakened : the young day looked on him with kindly glance ; it seemed glad once more to behold the light.

Lionel might have remained even more than an hour at his window, held by this charm, if he had not, turning his head to the right, suddenly perceived, in the depth of the valley, the Castle of Saligneux. From that moment he could think of nothing but Mdlle. de Saligneux, his evil genius, to whom he sent all his maledictions across the intervening space.

‘I do not believe,’ said he to himself, ‘that Mdlle. de Saligneux is bandy-legged, or hump-backed, or frightfully ugly ; but does she possess the features of my unknown, the fire of her glances, the proud look of her arched black eyebrows, her straightforward, clear, and penetrating voice ; and that tiny foot, that I have held in my hand ? That would settle all.’

Then he exclaimed,

‘No, I will not marry Mdlle. de Saligneux ! I swear it, by my own pride and by your brown eyes !’

And he added, laughing at himself,

‘It is three months now since I saw her, and I am still thinking of her. What a child I am !’

He was indeed. Shall we blame him for it ? It is a good thing to have a thorough knowledge of law ; it is also a good thing to have some childish fancies left, and to take them seriously. The first duty of youth is to be young.

After breakfast Lionel took the same walk alone that he had taken the previous evening with his father. On the way he thought neither of harvests nor irrigation, nor rotation of crops ; he only thought of his own affair. In a few hours his redoubtable father would return from Bourg, and then the struggle would begin afresh. He fancied he could see him before him, his brow knitted into the deep straight furrow that anger had cut there, his eyes sparkling, his hands clasped, saying, in an icy voice,

‘Well, sir, have you reflected ?’

And yet the further he went the firmer became his resolution, and the stronger grew his invincible antipathy for Mdlle. Saligneux. He imagined her now as a silly girl, endowed by the nuns with their petty manners ; now as a great rough gawky

girl, with a yellow complexion, large teeth, and pointed shoulders, moving awkwardly, as stiff as though she had swallowed one of the weathercocks of the paternal manor. In short, whatever her looks or her manners might be, he did not want her, because he was proud, because he was jealous of his liberty, because he would not agree to have his heart disposed of without his permission, because he had determined not to marry, or, at any rate, no woman whom he did not love.

Reflecting as he went, he reached the grove of oaks whither his father had taken him. He crossed it, and descended the grassy slope which terminated in the brook. He stopped near an old chestnut-tree, about fifty paces from the spot where the water-lilies grew. He looked at his watch.

‘I have still three hours to myself,’ said he. ‘This is not the moment to beat a retreat.’

He stretched himself out full-length on the grass, which was tall and bushy. Above him he saw the twisted branches of the chestnut-tree, its broad lacy leaves, among which the ripening fruit showed their brown spots, like the eyes of an unknown fair one. He soon half-closed his own, and, by an effort of will, he succeeded in forgetting his situation, his father, Mdlle. de Saligneux. He thought of nothing but a paper on English judges that the editor of a legal review had asked him to write. He was planning it out in his head,

drawing up its headings, and saying to himself, even whilst thus occupied,

‘A man who thinks and works is never altogether unhappy.’

Suddenly a voice made him start. The voice was singing, or rather reciting, accompanying with a sort of melopœia these lines of a well-known song :

‘Je n’ai ni bois ni terre,
Ni chevaux ni laquais ;
Petit propriétaire,
Mes fonds sont deux crochets.’

Lionel raised himself on his elbows and looked. A young girl was seated on the banks of the Limourde, near a clump of hazel-bushes. Her head was bent, her chin rested in her hand, so that the brim of her broad straw hat entirely hid her face. The next moment she raised her head, and Lionel thought he was dreaming ; his heart beat violently, he almost gave a scream. O surprise ! O mysterious dispensation of that all-powerful divinity whom Frederick the Great used to call his Sacred Majesty Chance ! That young girl singing, that young girl seated on the banks of the Limourde, was the Amazon of the Avenue des Poteaux, was the Cécile of the Théâtre Français, was the unknown ! Lionel took care not to show himself ; a rising in the ground hid him. As soon as he had somewhat recovered from his surprise, he gently pushed aside with both hands the grass which was

before him, and placed himself so as to see without being seen.

Silent and immovable he remained there, his heart beating with emotion, holding back his breath like a child who is afraid of putting a butterfly to flight. He knew that fair unknowns have wings, that they sometimes fly away and are never seen again.

Upon an urgent appeal from her father, Mdlle. de Saligneux had left the Marquis de Virevieille. She had that very morning come from Paris, where Madame de Juines had been to fetch her. After breakfast she had made the round of her domain, to make sure that it had sustained no fresh loss. She adored her Saligneux, even clipped, cut, and lessened; but having seen it diminish year by year, she never returned to it without wondering whether there would be any of it remaining. She had just reassured herself that the remainder was intact. Nevertheless, thinking of its former greatness, she could not resist a sigh. She was not, however, the sort of girl to abandon herself to melancholy, and to cheer herself she began to sing. As she sang, having an enterprising mind, she conceived the idea of obtaining and putting in her hair one of those beautiful water-lilies that she perceived at a little distance from her on the other side of the brook. She knew that these water-lilies belonged to the enemy, but this consideration only excited

her fancy. Yet she knew, too, that the enemy was always on the watch, and that it was dangerous to expose oneself before him ; and this second consideration made her hesitate. Finally, covetousness triumphed over prudence. She rose, and her first care was to fetch a rake that had been left in one of the meadows. She brought it, and then cast her eyes all round her. She looked to the right, to the left, everywhere ; she little thought that in the grass, behind a little elevation of the ground, in the shade of a chestnut-tree that protected him with its long branches, was a doctor of laws who lay and watched her.

Completely reassured, she sat down again and began to take off first her boots, then her stockings ; and soon Lionel, who did not miss one of her movements, saw two tiny little feet appear, which he thought he could see sparkling in the sun like two diamonds. She herself was contemplating them with some satisfaction. She had often been told that she had pretty feet, and she had not waited to be told before she knew it.

Having finished these preparations, she cautiously climbed down the bank and entered the water, which at this time of year was very shallow, and scarcely went above her ankle. However, when she reached the middle of the stream it went half-way up her leg, and she was obliged to turn back her skirt up to her knees, quite unconscious that

never in his life had the doctor of laws opened his eyes so wide. She soon reached the opposite bank, stretched out her arm and her rake, and pulled back a long stalk crowned by a beautiful silvery-white corolla. She hung her rake on the branch of a willow, and, using both her hands, she plucked the flower, which she regarded with delight, saying out loud,

‘How beautiful you are! All the more because you are stolen property.’

With these words she pressed it to her lips. Then she regained the left bank, reascended the slope, and hastened to put on her shoes and stockings. When she had finished, and was about to depart, she perceived that she had left her rake on the other side, and at the same moment she perceived that a handsome young man had just sprung from the earth, and was bowing respectfully to her.

She uttered a frightened scream, and her first impulse was to run away. Unfortunately she had not gone three steps before a breath of wind carried off her hat, whose strings were untied, and threw it into the Limourde. She stopped in embarrassment. Lionel had already seized the rake, by means of which he drew the hat that the current was carrying away out of the brook. Hereupon he returned, and, stationing himself in front of Mdle. de Saligneux, he said to her,

‘Have I the honour of speaking to Mdlle. de Saligneux?’

‘That may be,’ answered she, hardly conscious of the superhuman effort he had made to articulate calmly and without seeming an idiot that question, for him so big with fate. She added, ‘May I also be allowed to know who is honouring me by this question?’

‘M. Lionel Têterol,’ answered he.

‘Well, M. Lionel Têterol, will you be so obliging as to return what you have taken from me?’

‘Presently, mademoiselle,’ answered he gravely. ‘But first would you kindly explain to me how the rake came here; did it come all alone?’

‘I swear to you, sir, that it is mine.’

‘And can you swear to me, mademoiselle, that the water-lily you hold in your hand is also yours?’

‘So you recognised your water-lily at once!’ exclaimed she. ‘I am not surprised at that, sir. In your family there is a true fanaticism of ownership. I might hold a hundred water-lilies before you, and you would say, without a moment’s reflection, “That is mine.” O, what a fortunate gift! And if I refused to give back to you this charming water-lily which belongs to you, would you resort to a bailiff to get it back? It is quite possible. It rains bailiffs in this part of the world.’

‘No, mademoiselle; I should not send you a bailiff, but I should sacredly keep this hat.’

‘Come, yield to a good impulse; be generous; restore this without asking anything in return. Why do you want to have back this poor flower?’

‘In the first place, it belongs to me; in the second, it has been gathered by you.’

‘Very pretty,’ exclaimed she. ‘Sentiment, poetry! I did not know that plant grew in this country.’

‘Everything comes here, and flourishes here, mademoiselle, as soon as you are here.’

She made a deep curtsy, and, after a pause, continued,

‘I have been awkward; I have let myself be caught; I must pay. But how shall we manage to restore our property? We cannot throw them across the stream.’

‘You forget that there is a bridge two hundred steps from here.’

‘And you, sir, you forget that this bridge has been barricaded and closed by a gate, covered with lattice-work, bolted, and padlocked.’

‘I will climb over the gate.’

‘At your own risk and peril,’ said she.

With these words, they began to descend, the one the right, the other the left, bank of the Limourde, and both arrived at the same time at the two ends of the bridge. It was there that their fathers had held their first colloquy, and there the children held their first interview.

Lionel climbed the gate without much difficulty. Mdlle. de Saligneux advanced to meet him, but bethought herself otherwise, and suddenly retreated a few steps.

‘One moment, sir,’ said she : ‘I am withheld by a scruple. Is this bridge yours or mine?’

‘I believe it is yours.’

‘You believe! You must make sure. Think of it; the matter is one of importance. If I had the misfortune and the audacity to put the tip of my toe into the territory of the Têterols, then the bailiff would certainly be sent to me; for I tell you they abound here.’

And then, changing her expression and her manner, she added, with all the gravity of a finished diplomat,

‘Ah, sir, between you and me, could we not discover some means of putting an end to these miserable lawsuits, which distress those who lose them, and bring no glory to those who gain them?’

She looked at him, their eyes met, and he felt a transport of joy. He was on the point of answering her :

‘But you well know that this means has been discovered for us, and that you approve of it. As for me, know that since a quarter of an hour I think it admirable, wonderful.’

He had not time to open his lips. She suddenly exclaimed,

‘Certainly, sir; it seems to me that I must have seen you somewhere.’

‘For my part, I am sure of it.’

‘But where?’

‘Yes, it was—it must have been in the Bois de Boulogne one day, when I fell off my horse.’

She blushed as she said these words; for she remembered that, in replacing her on the saddle, he had held her foot, and at the same instant she remembered that just now she had been barefooted.

‘What were you doing under that chestnut-tree?’ she demanded, in a queenly voice.

‘I was fast asleep.’

‘And at what moment did you wake up?’

‘Excuse me. Before answering your question, I have one to ask you.’

‘Certainly; you have a genius for barter, give and take. I see we shall not have done with our lawsuits so soon. Well, then, ask.’

She could say no more. A shrill voice cried,

‘Claire, wherever can you be?’

‘Coming, aunt,’ replied Mdlle. de Saligneux, and, throwing the water-lily to Lionel, she seized her hat and rake and ran away.

Lionel, too, ran away, like a man who has a great joy to conceal; for joy makes us run just as fear does. His joy was almost frantic; chance had been kind to him, and had just struck a great blow to save him from the most cruel distress. He was

as happy as a gold digger who has discovered a vein, or a poor man who hears that he has drawn the greatest prize in the lottery; as much overcome by joy as a shipwrecked man who is miraculously borne to land; as surprised as a child who has gone to sleep after asking for the moon, and wakes to find it under his pillow. He felt the need of embracing some one or something; he remembered that he held in his hand the water-lily, on which Mdlle. de Saligneux's lips had rested; he drank the kiss that she had left there; and this was the only act of folly he committed, because there were two labourers close at hand working in the fields. As for being surprised and scandalised at the strange facility with which Mdlle. de Saligneux had agreed to marry a man whom she had never seen, he no longer thought of it. To justify her conduct he invented the most foolish arguments. She had had presentiments, divinations, without her decision being influenced by any interested motives; her expression, her beauty, testified to the perfect nobility of her sentiments. Lionel was in love, and love is madness; all inconsistencies are permitted it, its kingdom is the absurd.

At the stroke of six, M. Têterol returned; he was never a minute later. As he entered the dining-room, the floor creaked under his boots, and he greeted his son with a cold shake of the hand. During the whole of dinner he had the sombre, sul-

len, and fierce air of a Krupp cannon, loaded to the mouth, waiting to be fired. When coffee had been served, he emptied his whole cup at once, and dismissed Joseph. Then, leaning on the table, as was his habit, his heavy hands, that crushed whatever they touched, and his two strong elbows, which had won a broad road for themselves across the human crowd, he fixed on his heir an eye in which his idea seemed kindled and flaming like the fire at a forge, and said to him, in a jerky voice,

‘Well, Lionel, have you reflected?’

The flies buzzing round them were silent, feeling the gravity of the moment, and a deathlike stillness reigned throughout the room. Lionel did not answer for two minutes; these two minutes seemed to his father two centuries. At length the young man said,

‘Yes; I have reflected. I will do as you wish.’

M. Têterol’s face turned scarlet, and he drew his handkerchief from his pocket to wipe his temples, moist with joy.

‘Everything is for the best,’ exclaimed he. ‘I knew well, Lionel, that you were a sensible fellow. You have made your little calculations, and you have found out that your father is in the right. Remember, I am always in the right; it is one of my oldest habits. That is what comes of reflecting. You have discovered that it is no contemptible advantage for an ambitious young fellow to have

a Saligneux belonging to him. These country squires have good connections ; there are marquises related to them, and all these sort of people uphold one another ; they have a genius at intriguing. For a long time still, even during the Republic, they will have a great deal of influence. Just think of my lawsuits. They only had to whisper one word into the judge's ear, and it was found that the rabbits from their warren had not eaten my cabbages. The world is so silly ! And, then, I have already said to you, this harebrained baron will not grow very old, and there is no male posterity to whom he can leave his title. It is quite possible that at his death—'

'Let us speak no more about it,' interrupted Lionel. 'I have promised to do everything you wish.'

'Rather let us speak about it,' continued M. Têterol. 'I insist that this marriage is a stroke of fortune for you. This young lady is quite fresh and blooming, and yet she has already a great deal of sense and knowledge of the world. She will help you to get on, to make your way in the world. I have heard about her from M. Crépin.'

'Who is M. Crépin ?' asked Lionel.

'A rascal. And do not go and think that Mdlle. de Saligneux is frightfully ugly ; I only said that to put you in a passion ; you can fancy that I do not want a monster for my daughter-in-law. You

shall see her to-morrow. I met the baron just now ; we have settled everything, and to-morrow I shall introduce you. Of course I do not say that she is a Venus.'

'I beg of you, do not let us say any more about it,' broke in Lionel once more ; for his father kept him on the rack by persisting in praising Mdlle. de Saligneux, as though he were determined to disgust him with his happiness.

The obstinate old man never let go his victims. He rose and went round the table to come and sit beside his son. He himself opened the chest of cigars, offered him one, and obtained fire by striking a match on the sole of his boot.

While Lionel smoked, he continued :

'Forgive me, my boy ; I was a little hasty to you last night. Well, I can understand you ; you had some little love-affair in your mind. Lovers always fancy that there is only one woman in the world, while there are really thousands of them. It is not the most beautiful, it is the most useful, you must marry. You are a serious man, a strong man. I can already fancy you in your saddle, your princess behind you. Gee-up, trot ! I will supply the oats.'

'For Heaven's sake, say no more about it,' exclaimed Lionel once more ; for his father's metaphors seemed to him even more terrible than his direct thrusts.

At that moment Joseph announced the Abbé Miraud, who had come to pay his respects to the heir.

‘Come along, M. le Curé,’ exclaimed M. Têterol. ‘I want to introduce my Prince of Wales to you. He is well built, is he not? And to think that I have seen him no taller than my boot! Have I ever told you that he is called Lionel, after you? Your godson will do you honour; but you shall not make a clergyman out of him. He and I have the same opinions, the same heart, the same will.’

‘Yours, M. Têterol?’ replied the abbé, smiling, with the air of a timid man determined to make a venture.

‘Mine, mine, when I tell you that it is his also!’ replied M. Têterol. ‘That is just like those churchmen.’

And he added, as he passed his big fingers through his son’s chestnut hair,

‘You may say what you will, you cannot spoil my Prince of Wales. He knows too well what he owes me. And the deuce, I do not regret all that I have spent on his education! Look at this boy, M. le Curé; it is the best of my investments—twenty per cent.’

Lionel availed himself of the first opportunity of leaving the abbé and his father alone together, and retired into his room. Happiness has its sleep-

less nights, and that night Lionel never closed his eyes. It seemed to him as though before morning a thief would descend from the sky to snatch away his treasure, and he could not be quick enough in placing it under lock and key.

III.

On the 12th of September 1875, at three o'clock in the afternoon, M. Têterol, having opened a little gate with a large key, crossed the bridge over the Limourde with his son. A white necktie was drawn tightly round his bull-like neck, and choked him a little. He wore a brand-new overcoat of black cloth, ordered for the occasion, and in which he felt somewhat confined. He was always uncomfortable in new clothes ; for not only was he very stout, but when he thought of certain things his chest expanded so much that all the seams of his clothes began to crack. The tailor never had sufficient cloth to dress M. Têterol's pride.

He was in too good a humour that day to complain of his necktie, or his overcoat, or his tailors, or his shoes (which were too tight), or of any one. Never before had his face been so cheerful, his lips so smiling ; his thick grizzling eyebrows trembled with happiness. All the way he had been humming the air of 'Marlborough.' In crossing the bridge, he could not resist the pleasure of pushing

a loose stone with the end of his stick, and making it fall into the water, saying to Lionel,

‘That is how these squires maintain their property. We will render them the service of mending their bridge.’

When Cæsar perished, the sun turned pale, the Po left its banks, the statues shed bloody tears, ghosts walked the streets, and the forests resounded with dismal howls. When M. Têterol crossed the Limourde, the sun did not grow pale, and no wolves howled. It has, however, been related that, on the 12th September 1875, at three o’clock precisely, something strange did happen at Saligneux. A few moments before the air was perfectly still; suddenly a gust of wind violently bent the tops of the elms on the terrace, and the walls of the castle trembled.

The Baron of Saligneux had not a lively imagination; the gust of wind surprised him without moving him. M. Têterol had fixed three o’clock for his visit. He knew that man’s terrible punctuality, and he awaited the enemy, pacing one of the alleys in the park. As soon as he saw him appear in the distance, he advanced to meet him, his hat on one side, a flower in his buttonhole, a switch in his hand.

M. Têterol stopped short, and called out to him, ‘Here he is at last, M. le Baron! What do you think of him?’

The baron carefully surveyed Lionel, who bowed, and then fixed on him his proud and penetrating gaze.

‘Ah, sir,’ said the baron, ‘the trumpet of fame had already published your praises here. I think it is the first time that a trumpet has proclaimed the truth.’

With these words he held out his hand to him, and kindly wished him welcome. As they chatted, M. Têterol had gone on in front; he had an idea in his head, and was preparing for an effect that he did not wish to miss. When he came near the orchard, which flanked the castle on the right, he sought for something that he was disappointed not to find there. He pushed open a little gate and entered the orchard. It was a pear-tree he was seeking; it no longer existed, but his eagle-eye recognised the place where he had seen it long ago. He beckoned to M. de Saligneux and Lionel, and when they had come up with him,

‘M. le Baron,’ said he, in his loudest tones, ‘formerly there stood here a pear-tree—I seem to see it still—a beautiful pyramidal pear-tree. I was then a little country workman, an assistant gardener, very proud of being in the service of a Baron de Saligneux. And yet I have no reason to boast of your father’s kindness to me. I do not mean to say any harm of him. But he pretended to know something of horticulture, and he did not under-

stand its first principles. I will stick to what I have said, sir—he did not understand the very rudiments. He insisted that the shears are better than the pruning-knife for pruning fruit-trees. That is wrong, absolutely wrong. Every one who knows anything about it will tell you that the shears always eat more or less into the branch that is being cut.’

M. Têterol spoke of this pear-tree story with as much animation and excitement as though it had happened the day before ; it seemed as though the question had remained an open one for forty years. This man, with his eternal thoughts, had no idea of time ; his anger, like his memory, was always young.

‘One day, then,’ continued he, ‘I was employed in pruning a branch of this pear-tree ; and I was just preparing to nip the twigs, cutting them a length of eight centimètres. It was ten o’clock in the morning. Your father comes up to me dressed in an apple-green silk dressing-gown. For some moments he watches me at work ; then, pulling his hands out of his pockets, he begins to call me an ass and an idiot, and abuses me for crippling his pear-tree. Why should I cripple it ? I wished that pear-tree neither good nor evil. I have never taken very great interest in other people’s property ; but it has also been my principle to do well whatever I did. Your father becomes angry. I answer him. Then—are you listening to me ?—he was there, I

stood here ; then he gave me a great kick, which sent me flying against the tree.'

M. Têterol burst into a noisy fit of laughter. Then he drew himself up, planted his mighty hands on his mighty hips, and exclaimed,

'M. le Baron, what would your father have thought, if, at the moment when he administered this little punishment, some one could have told him that one day I should have a son who would marry his granddaughter?'

Saying this he puffed out his cheeks, turned his head to right and left, as though with one glance to embrace the universe, which in him acknowledged its lord and master.

M. de Saligneux listened to him, and as he listened, he looked at his stick. Holding it in the middle, between his thumb and first finger, he made it turn and spin, rise and fall, and he felt it tremble under his fingers. At last, driving from him all evil thoughts, he replied, in soothing tones, with an enchanting smile,

'M. Têterol, it is possible that my father did not understand about pruning fruit-trees, and that he was wrong in preferring the shears to the pruning-knife. For all that he was a man of sense. Could he have foreseen that a kick skilfully given would one day have such fortunate consequences for his family, he would certainly have doubled the dose to be more sure of the result.'

All the time his father had been speaking, Lionel had experienced mingled feelings of discomfort and confusion ; he had made himself small ; he had tried to hide himself under the ground. M. de Saligneux's reply suddenly roused him, and he felt himself blushing over his cheeks and ears. As for M. Têterol, he had become meditative ; he was considering whether he ought to take this reply well or badly. The pill was gilded, but beneath the gilt was a bean in the disguise of a bonbon, and he had some difficulty in digesting the bean. He looked at the baron, who had an air of perfectly candid innocence.

‘Honi soit qui mal y pense !’ said he to himself.

And his good humour returned.

‘But where is Mdlle. de Saligneux ?’ asked he. ‘The time has come. I am anxious to introduce my son to her.’

‘That is unnecessary,’ said the baron. ‘These young people met already yesterday, and introduced themselves to one another.’

‘Ah, you sly fellow, you never told me that !’ exclaimed M. Têterol, shaking his finger at his son.

‘Sir,’ said the baron, turning to Lionel, ‘I want to ask some advice from your father, who understands so well about pruning fruit-trees. My daughter is somewhere in the garden ; be so kind as to go and look for her. She knows of your coming, and is expecting you.’

HACKLÆNDER.

BORN IN BURTSCHIED, NOV. 1, 1816 ; DIED IN STUTTGART,
JULY 6, 1877.



HACKLÆNDER.

HACKLÆNDER has long enjoyed a popular reputation as a prolific writer of readable romances. His collected works form sixty volumes, and not a few of these have been translated into various European languages. He is considered one of the best of Germany's modern humorists, and his countrymen are fond of comparing him with Dickens, a comparison in no wise appropriate, but indicating the high estimation in which he is held.

Hacklænder was born at Burtscheid, near Aix-la-Chapelle. At the age of twelve he was left a destitute orphan. He was adopted by some relations as poor as himself, who could give him no educational advantages, and soon apprenticed him to a draper at Elberfeld. He disliked this business, and enlisted into the army, for which he had conceived an enthusiasm. A short experience proved to him that, notwithstanding all his pains to satisfy his superiors, he would be debarred from advancement for lack of the necessary book-learning, although he had acquired all the necessary practical knowledge. Dispirited and disgusted, he quitted the service, and successively entered three shops, all

of which failed soon after, so that his entry came to be looked upon as of evil omen, and he could find no fourth place. But Hacklænder did not lose courage. He went to Leipzig, where he knew a bookseller's clerk, and began writing for a daily paper the reminiscences of his soldier-life. Republished as a volume, the sketches attracted notice, and opened out a literary career for the author. With this piece of good fortune came another. A Baron von Taubenheim took a fancy to him, and begged him to be his companion in a tour to the East. Hacklænder accepted with alacrity; it had always been his wish to see the world, and the journey proved of great use to his mental development. It also procured him the acquaintance of the King of Wurtemberg, who appointed him secretary to the Crown Prince. By and by the narrow and anti-patriotic spirit of this petty court made Hacklænder's position untenable. He was decried as 'a foreigner,' and the king had to dismiss him in 1849. He, however, retired upon his full salary, and hereupon proceeded to witness the Italian campaign in the camp of Marshal Radetsky, and wrote its history. He was also attached to the staff of the present German Emperor during the campaign against Baden. In 1859 the King of Wurtemberg appointed him Director of the Royal Buildings and Gardens; and Hacklænder contributed greatly to the embellishment of Stuttgart.

Up to this time Hacklænder had drawn his literary themes from military life or his travels. In *Handel und Wandel* he turned his trade experiences to account. This was followed by his chief work, *European Slave-Life*, a book that has been translated into every European language ; twice into English. It endeavours to show that social necessities make slaves of us all, and is the only novel with a pronounced tendency written by Hacklænder. As a rule he is free from this national propensity, and narrates simply to amuse. He does not depict the life of the soul, but the outer life ; he is a *genre* painter, who dashes-in his effects with bold sharp strokes, and is free from ambiguity and obscurity. He ridicules all empty social forms ; he seeks for the true human kernel in all beings. He does not set out with a purpose in view, but lets characters and incidents develop under his pen. Avoiding verbosity and over-minutiæ, he shows that he is a man of the world, and not merely a closet-writer, like too many of his countrymen.

In 1859 Hacklænder edited the popular illustrated journal, *Ueber Land und Meer*. Editing and writing, he lived at Stuttgart quietly and busily. Only when the Italian War of 1859 broke out he once more was called among soldiers. The Emperor of Austria sent for him to Verona, and

he remained in the imperial head-quarters till after Solferino.

Besides his fresh terse stories, full of humour, life, and action, Hacklænder has written some popular plays, of which one, *Der Geheime Agent*, is especially excellent. Many of his tales are founded upon his personal knowledge ; for he has seen many and varied phases of life ; and his various court, bourgeois, military, and literary experiences stand him in good stead. A fresh healthy atmosphere pervades all his writings.

The one of Hackländer's works that is likely to live longest, and which, though his first, is still, in a sense, his most popular, is his *Pictures from the Life of a Soldier in Time of Peace*. It purports to be the memoirs of a young Prussian volunteer who has entered the army, deluded by the poetical glamour of a soldier's life. He tells simply and vividly all his experiences, from his entrance. He takes us with him to the drill-ground, stables, watch, prison, and military hospitals ; lets us assist at manœuvres and forced marches, and initiates us into his growing disgust with this soulless career. The various characters are admirably delineated : the old colonel, rude and severe, enamoured of military discipline, yet never forgetting that he too has been young ; the major, who loves to show his power and domineer over his subordinates ; the guardian of the hospital, who half starves his

patients, and pockets the money that should have been spent on their nourishment. All are life-like characters, and stand out boldly from the canvas. We quote a passage from this lively book.

The Volunteer.

When a youthful spirit possesses natural courage, a lively imagination, and some thoughtlessness, and has read many fine books, such as *Spiess*, *Kramer*, and others, it is impossible for him to believe that those glorious days of splendid armour, of nodding plumes, of beautiful dames mounted on light-brown steeds, should so completely have vanished from the face of the earth. Those whom Fate has cast, as it did me, behind a shop-counter in a little town where there are no soldiers, may easily have the same experience as I. In my eyes, the military profession was the only one in which the old days of chivalry survived. I thought that here the martial spirit, the fresh living existence of the knights and mounted squires of the Middle Ages, were still to be found. Only the valley, in which lay our town, seemed to me dull and without enchantment. Beyond the mountains that closed it in, it must be very different. Doubtless there were still dense forests, where wicked dragons lay in wait for passing travellers; and calm lakes, on whose shores virgins, clad in white, sat wringing their hands, waiting for deliverance out of the

clutches of the terrible giant who held them enchained in golden fetters.

Once in my life I had seen two officers. Henceforth all my ideas of modern knighthood were concentrated in these two men. My imagination had unfortunately found something to rest on. Yes, it still lived on, that glorious time. In my mercantile heart dangerous seed had been sown. I began to make serious plans for leaving my hated trade when my apprenticeship should be at an end, and for becoming free, *i.e.* a king's servant.

Some miles from my home lay the nearest garrison town, where lived an old cousin of mine, a retired lieutenant-colonel, with whom I resolved to discuss the matter. I begged leave of absence, and set off for the town one Sunday morning. My relation received me very kindly. He was a little man, with sharply-marked features, whose arched eyebrows gave him a commanding expression. He had led an infantry regiment in the battle of Pirmasens, where an envious volley of grape-shot had cut off all chance of his further promotion. He generally wore a green overcoat, gray trousers, with broad red stripes; round his neck the Russian order of St. Anne (1st class); and in his hand he carried a large silver snuff-box, on which was engraved his family arms. He was a kindly old gentleman, especially when he sat in his room and told of his campaigns. I communicated to him my desire to

leave the career of merchant, and enter into the nobler state of defender of my country.

* * * * *

My admission depended on the decision of the colonel of the brigade.

‘Well,’ said he at length, ‘we will make a trial together. But, above all, remember three things, which I must have attended to in my brigade. In the first place, order ; in the second place, order ; and in the third place, order. Thus only can discipline be maintained ; and this sums up all. Go, then, in Heaven’s name, to the artillery barracks to Sergeant Löffel, and say his colonel presents his compliments to him, and sends him a trifling addition. Good-bye, young artilleryman.’ Overcome by my happiness, I made him a bow, and turned to the door ; but the colonel called after me : ‘When I next have the pleasure of seeing you, I should be glad not to see the high cravat and collar.’

I went into the barracks and presented myself to the sergeant. He examined my slight figure with no contented air, muttered something about too many volunteers, hard service, weak build ; then he called to a young man who was seated at the table writing :

‘Bombardier, take this young man to the quartermaster, and let him try on his uniform.’

The bombardier went with me through a long corridor. At last we entered No. 66, a large room,

a sacred apartment, and therefore, as the first of its kind, called The Chamber, just as the first book in the world is called The Bible. Here all the best weapons and clothes are kept. Here hung, ranged according to numbers, the complete equipment for service, from the shoe-nails of the artillery horses to the new hair-broom for the mortars, from the martingale on the trousers to the warm cloth coat. If war breaks out, all the gunners and horses can cast off the old rags and trappings which they wear in ordinary life, can enter the chamber naked, and leave it fully equipped.

A holy awe, an elevating feeling, overcame me when I entered this temple. I should have liked to press the bright weapons and shining uniforms to my full heart, when suddenly the quartermaster appeared from behind a great heap of cloaks. My bombardier said,

‘Quartermaster, the dozen (namely, of volunteers) is complete.’ Whereupon the other replied,

‘Well, then, we have eleven stockfishes and one herring.’

Before being dressed I was measured. For this purpose the usual instrument was employed. I stood on the step ; the quartermaster let the movable ferrule fall on to my head so roughly that I started and drew myself together. He laughed, and calmly explained to me that he did this to get the right measure, because the young gentlemen

generally stretched themselves to seem taller than they really were. Practically, this was not agreeable, for my head ached. Then I was dressed, but everything was too large and wide for me ; and when I stood there, completely equipped, I looked like the children in the well-known engraving, who are playing at soldiers with their father's weapons. Besides a shako, uniform, trousers, sword, and boots with spurs attached to them, he hung upon me portmanteau, pistols, pouch, and a cloak ; and in this array, laughing, he led me back to the serjeant, who was no less amused at my appearance. I was immediately taken to room No. 64, which I was to share with a corporal and ten gunners ; and from there direct to the tailor's room, where my clothes were to be altered to fit.

When I came back to my room I found my new colleagues, who had taken possession of all my weapons, busily employed in cleaning them. My whole equipment was in a dreadful state. It would be a mistake to suppose that recruits receive bright arms from the chamber, least of all the volunteers, who always receive the rustiest and dirtiest that can be found. This gives them an opportunity of at once achieving a feat in cleaning them. I should have been in no small perplexity had I been obliged to clean my arms myself for the first time, and was therefore heartily glad to find them in such good hands. I expressed my

gratitude to my companions for their kindness, and was just going to attack the spurs, which were still quite red and fastened to the dirty boots. But the gunner with the largest beard said to me,

‘Leave that alone ; we will clean it in a few minutes. But,’ he continued, with a grave mien, ‘they have given you horribly dirty things ; and I am afraid, without brandy, it will not be possible to get them quite bright. A little butter will do no harm to rub the sword-blade and the pistols ; but a piece of sausage would do just as well.’

I declared myself willing to provide brandy, butter, and sausage, and pulled out a thaler. He immediately sent out one of the men with it, and said pleasantly,

‘If you care to get out and have a look at the town, you will find all the things in excellent condition by the time you come back.’

I followed his agreeable advice ; and when I returned a few hours later, I found my weapons clean and bright on the stand. My companions were cheerfully seated round the table, all of them in a condition that plainly showed me that they had not used all the brandy for cleaning purposes. Before the bed that had been allotted me, there hung, as before the others, a little card, on which might be read, in large letters, H., GUNNER ; and this delighted me. I contemplated it for some time, and several times repeated my name and my

present title of gunner. I had become something in the world.

Next morning I was to be presented to the captain. I must not mention his real name, and therefore will call him Enemy—for God knows he never was my friend ; in fact he disliked all the volunteers, for they were generally rather wild young men, who, when not actually serving, did not always do exactly what was right. Thus we seldom wore the coarse uniforms, but had finer clothes of our own. We did not always wear the prescribed heavy sword-belt ; a lighter kind, made of white patent leather, seemed to us more desirable for our promenades. Captain Enemy was also much annoyed when we drank a bottle of wine in the café where he drank a glass of sugar-water, which we often did on purpose to vex him.

I was obliged to wait a full hour in the sergeant's room before the captain appeared. The stiff collar of my jerkin, which for the first time enclosed my throat very tightly, drove the blood to my head, and a glass into which I happened to look revealed to me that I had a very red face. The captain, who had meantime entered, seemed to notice this, for his first remark, after he had contemplated me with crossed arms for some time, was,

‘We seem to have made a particularly good breakfast this morning.’

This was one of his constant phrases. He meant by it that I had drunk a great deal of brandy. I answered truthfully that I had not yet taken anything. He gave me an angry look, and said,

‘We know better.’

I bowed and was silent. He went on :

‘Sixteen years old?’

‘Yes, captain.’

‘You should say, “At your service, captain.”’

‘At your service, captain.’

‘You seem to be very delicate.’

‘At your service—no, captain.’

‘I know better.’

Hereupon he turned to the sergeant :

‘Let Corporal Dose take him into his department and drill him.’

Such was the first interview I had with my chief, which had not greatly edified me. I had hoped that he might make sympathetic inquiries about my former condition, express his pleasure at my love for the military profession, and such-like. Nothing of the sort. On the sunny horizon of my imagination there appeared some dark clouds. Alas, how soon was my sky to be completely overcast !

I was to receive my first drill on foot ; and for this purpose the sergeant conducted me to the barrack-yard, and there presented me to my instructor,

the Corporal Dose whom the captain had appointed to this office. This man was the tallest in the whole battery—six foot two. With this unusual height, and a figure as broad above as below, in his uniform he looked, from a distance, something like a coloured watch-case. His face always wore a serious expression, and yet he was for ever trying to be witty, even to his captain and other officers, which often led to bad results. In his leisure hours he wrote poems. Such was Corporal Dose.

There we stood on the parade, where I was to be made a man, as my instructor expressed it. According to his catechism, an ordinary recruit was at least three-quarters a brute. I, as a volunteer, had the good fortune to be counted among the half-men ; he even allowed that I knew something of good manners, as I only partook of a sixth part of some spirits that we drank together, and left him the rest.

The drill began, and I devoted all my attention to it.

‘Attention!’

I started as though struck by lightning, and stood like a post. I had hit that.

‘Now, you see,’ explained Dose, ‘when I command “Stand at ease!” the soldier puts forward his right foot and moves his limbs, but on no account speaks ; but when I say “Attention!” again, you must not only literally obey the word of command,

but I must perceive a starting, an alarm in you, that proves to me you have understood the importance of the moment. The word "Attention" breathes a soul into the limbs, and converts the unbridled ungoverned mass into a soldier. Therefore "Attention!"'

There I stood, an unfinished statue, and the corporal was putting the sculptor's finishing touches. He examined me closely, retreated a step, walked round me, and noticed from a considerable distance the faults in my posture. These he remedied with a skilful hand, now bending me an inch to right or left, now pulling back my shoulder-blades, now, by gentle pressure under my chin, raising my face to a good point for surveying the sky. Then he twisted my hands and brought my little finger into contact with the red seam of my trousers. This last position seemed absolutely necessary in his eyes. 'Finger on the seam' was often introduced at drill among the other words of command. My posture on the first day did not displease him.

'Stand at ease!'

My right foot moved forwards. I might once more be a brute—Dose's favourite expression for recruits out of the ranks.

Thus began my practical military studies. Now my instructor passed on to theory, and this he commenced with a preface or introduction that

was anything but bad. He began something in this fashion :

‘Just as in drill the word “Attention” forbids the soldier to make the slightest movement, the word “Subordination,” in its narrowest sense, gives exactly the same command to the mind, and especially to speech. Subordination really means nothing but to hold one’s tongue ; for if a soldier neither moves nor complains, not even in his thoughts, *i.e.* does not put on a cross expression, he understands subordination. The only word that you may always say, even if an officer says to you “You are an ass !” is “At your service ;” then there is an end of the matter. But this is the most difficult of all tasks, especially to you young gentlemen, who can never be silent, or at any rate give a polite and modest answer, but are generally much too ready with your tongues. And that is all the worse for you. I could give you many an instance. Therefore— Attention !’

All of a sudden ? In spite of the instruction I had just received concerning immobility, I could not resist giving a little side glance. Why had Dose so suddenly resumed the drill ? Ah, I saw how it was ! Up above a flowered dressing-gown was leaning against the window, and in it was the sergeant, who was smoking a long pipe and watching my drill. Now I exerted myself doubly ; bent over in front at an angle of at least sixty degrees ;

raised my head so high that I could comfortably see the weathercock on the steeple of the neighbouring garrison church. I really stood splendidly, and made several turns to right and left, treading so violently that my heels ached. But the sergeant at the window smiled graciously and approvingly; then the corporal ventured to look up and assure the great man in the dressing-gown that I was doing pretty well; whereupon he immediately ordered the instruction to cease for to-day. We now abandoned the serious stiff tone maintained when on duty, and fell into a lighter and easier manner. We then repaired to Madame Linksen, whose restaurant the corporal could not praise sufficiently.

I had imagined that this sort of military café would be a large hall, where the soldiers would be seated at long oak tables, doing justice to the contents of full bright cans, which cans would be hanging round the walls. I formed in my own mind a sort of picture of a castle-hall. My imagination had once more run away with me. Madame Linksen was the wife of the fire-master, and, in respect of cleanliness, had the advantage over all other similar establishments in the barracks. But it would be a great mistake on that account to suppose that her establishment was really conducted in a clean and orderly manner. Only a regular soldier or an innocent novice would become regular customers here. Madame Linksen was known for giving the

largest credit, but also for taking the largest profits. She had an especial art in enticing the remaining money out of the pockets of us young fellows ; and she managed to make a sojourn within her four walls endurable, nay, even pleasant, and at last absolutely necessary, since there was nothing better to be had. During my first months of service, when I was still in pocket, whenever I appeared at the door of her room, however full it might be, she always managed to clear a place for me. Madame would either turn her little boy off the bed and offer it to me as a sofa, or glance round with searching looks, and, in the spirit, open her credit-book and see who of those present was most in her debt. He must give up his seat ; and, if he understood good manners, he rose of his own accord at her significant glance, so that it might seem as though he were tired of sitting. If he was difficult of comprehension, Madame Linksen did not hesitate to acquaint him with her wish in words.

In this *café militaire* might be found, between ten and eleven in the morning, all the gourmands and fashionable gentlemen of the battery who possessed either money or credit. It was considered the thing to take at this hour a glass of spirits for four pfennige, a sausage or sandwich for eight pfennige ; in fact, some breakfast for about a gro-schen ; and, while eating, to grumble at the ser-

vice, the officers, the horses, and retail past adventures. The young and inexperienced, like myself, behaved quite passively, and listened eagerly to the mighty words that fell from the lips of those older in the service. The benches and chairs were all occupied, even the tables and bed were covered; the men lay with their shakos hanging carelessly on one side, and held them firm by clutching the chains between their teeth. The swords, hanging between their legs, served as a support to lean the head upon. Thus the company sat together, chatting, lying, and swaggering. One would declare that he had come to words with an officer whom he disliked; and, if we were to believe his confused account and his significant gesture of the hand, accompanied by a self-satisfied smile, he had at least offered his superior officer a box on the ear. Another had been in a tavern the night before, had broken everything there to bits, had run away, had fallen into the hands of the patrol, had forced it to flight, and finally, at the door of the barracks, had run down the watch who wanted to arrest him. They outdid one another in the relation of their heroic deeds. So they sat talking, swearing, and laughing until at length, towards eleven o'clock, the flourish of a trumpet brought very different movement into the assembly. Outside, the trumpeter of the day was trying his instrument and sounding it softly, preparatory to blowing the sum-

mons to the roll-call clearly and correctly the next moment. Instantly the assembly broke up ; every one began to arrange his dress and his arms, paid for what he had had or gave madame a significant look. As soon as the signal sounded, all rushed off in the greatest haste to the roll-call at the meeting-place of the battery.

For a young soldier, especially for those of a light disposition, such as we younger ones mostly were, the roll-call is a bad ticklish moment. It may truly be said that here everything is brought to the light of day. This is the moment when the captain and the officers have nothing particular to do, and are therefore able calmly to consider, censure, and punish the faults and irregularities committed by the company, as well as discover new offences. If one of us unfortunates had replaced a missing button by the most ingenious *manœuvre de force*, *i.e.* fastened the braces and trousers together with a piece of string (the expression, *manœuvre de force*, which we gave to any contrivance of this sort, is taken from the heading in our artillery text-book to the paragraph on piecing together broken pieces of cannon), however well he might have concealed the deficiency, so that it had not been noticed in the morning while riding or at drill, one of the officers was sure to spy it out and summon the culprit before the battery to fitting punishment. If any one had tried to evade the morning's drill by de-

claring himself ill, and had even succeeded in deceiving the doctor, and extorting from him a certificate of serious catarrh or bad colic, the illness was reported to the captain at the roll-call, who immediately sent the orderly to make sympathetic inquiries after the invalid, his real object being to discover whether the patient was really in his bed or in his room at all. If the orderly reported that the invalid could not be found, woe be to him. If, however, the invalid was found in his room, he generally had to appear before the company, and usually arrived in an old torn dressing-gown and slippers to be examined as to his condition.

One day about a dozen had reported themselves ill, and at the roll-call the captain made a great hue-and-cry, and sent off the officer of the day, in hot haste, to fetch them all together to the courtyard. The officer went: but came back directly with the answer that all the invalids were in their beds, and refused to expose themselves to the air in their dangerous condition. Renewed oaths from the captain, and the command instantly to bring the invalids 'here.' At the word 'here' he pointed to the ground before him; and the officer, being a very exact man, calmly drew out his sword, marked a cross at the spot where the captain's finger would have touched the ground if prolonged, and was about to go. A thundering 'Stop!' from the captain detained him. 'Sir, what

is the meaning of that mark?' The officer calmly replied that, in order exactly to obey the captain's command, he had marked the spot to which he was to bring the invalids. The unfortunate officious man! He had not dreamt that morning that he should that day eat his bread—bread, in the literal sense of the word—in prison. Five minutes after the above-mentioned occurrence the officer in charge was led to No. 7½. This is the name given, for the sake of brevity, to the military prison which bore this number.

Such scenes, with orders of imprisonment, were the usual additions to the roll-call, which we therefore daily anticipated with great anxiety; for misfortunes come quickly, and our captain possessed a little red book—in which every one, but especially we volunteers, had his own account—in which he entered everything disorderly and irregular. This he consulted daily, and looked to see who had enough crosses or remarks to be ready for punishment. Then he thrust his right hand into his uniform, looked up to heaven, and considered how many days he should allow this or the other person to contemplate the past and the future in that place, 'where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.' He put out his right foot and began to make several movements, the meaning of all which was well understood by us. Thus, if he struck his heel into the ground, it was an infallible sign of storm,

and woe to him into whose tackle the wind struck ! When the captain began to strike the ground with his foot, all those who had a bad conscience stood stretched out as straight as a pin, and the initiated could have judged, from their excellent position, the greatness of their debit in the captain's book. Sometimes when he saw on our faces the universal desire to please him, and fear to displease him, and if he happened to be in a good humour, he only shook his finger at us, as much as to say, 'I shall soon go among you and hold a terrible muster.' That would be all for the one day ; but if, on the contrary, he wanted to begin a dispute with any one, a dirty or dusty rowel would offer an excellent opportunity.

'Sir, when were your boots last cleaned ?'

'This morning, captain,' was the answer.

'Sir, that is a lie ! I know you well—you are a sloven.'

'But, captain, this morning—'

'Sir, will you be silent ? or it will be the worse for you ! Sergeant, give that man three days in prison for dirtiness and contradiction.'

Then he held a long sermon, prepared the lightning to hurl it at our heads on some future occasion, and departed with clanging footsteps.

The real object of the roll-call is to assemble the whole company once a day, to see whether they are all at hand. For this purpose all are

called by name, according to the list, and answer by a loud 'Here!' The missing are of course punished. Then the sergeant, as the captain's organ, gives the orders for the next twenty-four hours; and if no *intermezzo*, like the one just described, occur, the whole business may be concluded in a quarter of an hour. However, we had almost always the pleasure of standing a whole hour, between twelve and one, in the burning heat of summer or cold of winter.

My first roll-call, at which I assisted to-day, went off pretty well. Captain Enemy came up to me several times, pressed my shoulder-blades together, drew up my head, and continually muttered, 'Position, position!' He asked some of my comrades whether they had not made a very large breakfast; but, on the whole, was very gracious. I also learnt to know the other officers of the battery: I will speak of these gentlemen another time.

The first night I spent in the barracks I slept very badly. The freshly-filled straw-bed did not yield at all to the pressure of my body, and I had several times in the night one and the same dream. I thought I was lying on a hill, down which I tried to roll as children do. At first I succeeded very well, but when I reached the valley I knocked against the trunk of a tree that lay in my way. I woke and found, to my surprise, that I had fallen out of bed. This happened to me several times;

I therefore resolved, towards three o'clock, not to sleep any more. I was cheered by the thought, 'To-day, for the first time, you will be initiated into the mysteries of the stables.' Ah, I was to learn to know them only too well, these true mysteries! At four o'clock I got up, and anxiously awaited the signal which should summon me to the horses, those creatures that a brave knight must honour, love, clean, and feed as his second self. At last the trumpet sounded. The whole room was in confusion, and I was the first in the passage, where I was just in time to see the bugler blowing the signal in his shirt. Then he slipped back into his room, to spend a few more hours in his warm bed. I did not like that in the bugler, the man who must be first on the field, brave and ready. What can he not effect by a single flourish of his trumpet! And he had not even his trousers on when he blew the summons! Did not this man recognise the height of his calling? When I had hitherto imagined a flourish of trumpet, it was blown by a man with a mighty beard, armed, his sword by his side—a man worthy that a whole troop of brave men should follow the breath of his lips.

One more soap-bubble that had burst. It was long before I could forget the bugler without his trousers; but soon I saw many things bare and naked that had seemed from a distance glorious and bright.

JOKAI.

BORN IN KOMORN IN HUNGARY, FEB. 19, 1825 ;
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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

J O K A I.

JOKAI is the most popular and prolific writer of Hungarian fiction. The scenes and characters to which he introduces his readers are as interesting as they are novel. Written by an ardent patriot, his books have all the underlying purpose of rousing a feeling of national pride and independence among his countrymen. Almost without exception his novels and tales embody the history of the national movement and civil war that devastated Hungary during 1848 and 1849, and first made the Hungarians the objects of keen and sympathising interest to the rest of Europe. In Jókai's writings are to be found sketches of Hungarian life among the upper and lower classes ; the haughty noble, proud as Lucifer, poor, ignorant, superstitious, full of generous impulses, perverted by want of political and social expression ; the picturesque peasant, clad in his sheepskin, who has a good feeling, a bearing, a courtesy of demeanour far above all his wild appearance. Though till so recently mere serfs, Jókai shows us what superior men these are, and how it is merely the feudal system that has stood

in the way of Hungary's progress. It was too long the part of the Hapsburg rule to crush out of existence all the political institutions of this country, while the severe censorship exercised over printed productions repressed intellectual culture, and hampered all original work. Prose fiction is indeed of recent origin in Hungary. It first came into existence early in this century. Josika created it, he was followed by Kuthy and Eötvös, and they in their turn by Jókai.

Jókai, who was born at Komorn, near Pressburg, in Hungary, has penned a charming autobiographical account of his early years. While in his teens he lived in very modest circumstances, associating with Petöfi, the great Hungarian lyricist, and Orlay, the historical painter. Orlay in those days desired to be a poet, Petöfi an actor, and Jókai a painter. All attained an eminent goal, only life arranged their parts a little differently from their desires. Jókai did indeed paint a few bad pictures, but he also wrote at the age of seventeen a good drama, *The Jewish Boy*, which was crowned by the Hungarian Academy. He was indentured to a lawyer, and worked no less than sixteen hours daily, devoting the day to his studies, the nights to his pleasures, in the shape of literary pursuits. It chanced that his master one day stumbled across his manuscripts, and thought them so full of talent that, without informing the author, he took them

to a publisher, and caused them to appear in print. This was in 1846, when Jókai was barely twenty-one, and the work met with such success that the lawyer advised him to quit his office and devote himself solely to his pen. From that moment his novels succeeded each other rapidly, and soon after he became the editor of the best Hungarian weekly journal, *Eletképek*, which counted the foremost writers amongst its contributors. He married an actress, with whom he has lived most happily ; but unfortunately the step caused a breach with his family. When the revolutionary days of 1848 dawned, and Hungary tried hard to wring from the Austrians the constitution they had so long denied her, Jókai stepped forward into the political arena, and since that moment his figure has been a prominent one in the public life of his nation. When the revolution had ended in sorrow and depression, he was among those condemned to die, and was only saved, thanks to his wife's bravery and resolution. For some months he lay hidden, but at last, thanks also to his noble wife, was pardoned, and allowed to return to Pest, where he has since lived.

Jókai returned to Pest in 1850. At that period there was no national literature or energy left in Hungary. It had been extinguished in this abortive effort after freedom. Petöfi had perished upon the field of battle, Déak had retired from political life, Eötvös was buried in learned researches con-

cerning the equality of nations, Arany attended only to his legal duties. The Academy at Pest had closed its doors, not to reopen them until ten years later. The National Museum could not exhibit its treasures, its funds had been confiscated; at the national theatre only Italian operas might be played. During the years of complete mental stagnation, Jókai alone tried to rouse his nation from their death-like stupor. He produced, in twenty years, no less than one hundred and forty volumes, containing twenty-three long novels, seven dramas, and three hundred and fourteen novelettes, works that were eagerly read by a Magyar population numbering scarcely six million souls. In all these works his one endeavour is to raise the national self-confidence of his native land. The politician, the patriot, is discernible in all. They are stories of real life, giving a practical idea of Hungary, its problems, difficulties, and aspirations. The two natural evils from which the land has had to suffer so cruelly, famine and floods, are brought forward again and again with masterly force, not with a view merely to describe them, but to show how both could be obviated. To the honour of his countrymen Jókai, though an author writing in a language that has so limited an area, soon grew rich. In 1863 he founded a paper called *Hon* ('Fatherland'), which is the organ of the Moderate Left, in which he daily writes at least one leading

article. His fertility is astonishing, and so is his versatility. He further edits a kind of Hungarian *Punch*, *Nestökös* ('The Comet'), in which he not only writes, but which he helps to illustrate with spirited drawings full of local colour. As with his pen, so with his pencil; he dashes-in effects with broad strong handling, so that by the simplest means his situations are effective.

It has been objected to his novels that they are wanting in artistic construction, and that the scenes hang together rather loosely. And the objection is just. At the same time the cause of this fault is easy to discover. Nearly all Jókai's novels appeared originally in the *feuilleton* of a newspaper, hence they have not been written with a view to consecutive reading. This is doubtless a serious fault. To the non-Hungarian reader too there is something almost bewildering in the variety of nationalities with which he is constantly brought into contact. The conglomeration of such distinct nations and religions that make up the kingdom of Hungary are all reflected in Jókai's pages. It is a kaleidoscope of colours and customs strange to our eyes and habits. But we cannot fail to feel that we have come in contact with a real native talent, from whose pages all imitation of foreign types is far removed. He has humour too, rich and individual; he draws characters with plastic force; he is a keen observer of men and things. If at times he writes

carelessly, it is that he writes too much ; but he is always readable, and his rich talent exercises a great charm and influence over his countrymen.

Jókai has three times represented his nation in Parliament as a member of the Moderate Left. His country's weal is his watchword, the aim of all his efforts, whether as member, journalist, poet, or novelist. He lives very quietly ; in the summer, in an elegant villa near Pest, on one of the picturesque eminences that surround that fine old city, and where a fair wine ripens in his grounds ; in the winter he moves into the city. He writes in a room filled with exotic flowers, pictures, and books, at a round table, by the side of which stands a large telescope. In the summer it is his delight to tend his flowers and fruits. He says of himself : ' For twenty years I dared a terrible combat, in which none aided or protected me save God, and no one loved me save my wife. Now I have conquered, and know that my nation esteems me beyond my deserts.'

In Jókai's novel of *Terrible Days* he delineates the conditions of Hungary in 1831, when the nation suffered terribly under its political oppression, and when the first European visitation of the cholera added to the troubles it had to endure. Our extract is taken from this book.

The Plague.

There is among us a mighty mistress, whose life the wise and learned men have not yet recognised, although they can tell us so much of her power ; whom they have not yet taught us to fear, although we all turn to her with our hopes.

It is not Hell that I mean, but the Earth. The good, blessed, peaceful earth, that is not so passionate as the other elements—fire, water, and air ; that calmly lets itself be trodden on, and wounded, and its back be sown with towns, and its bones be destroyed by mines ; which looks calmly on, while man works and acts at his own free will.

Has any one ever yet addressed the Earth with this question : ‘ Lady and mistress, good and blessed Earth, do you like our conduct up here ? Does it please you that we devastate your beautiful cool forests, and thus deprive your body of its shelter from the burning gaze of the sun ; that we force your rivers into beds, dry up your ponds, and abandon you to torturing thirst ; that we cleave your body and make use of its parts, and force them to give us food and drink ; that we water your blooming fields with blood, and bury our dead in your lap ; that we live upon you, and bless you and curse you, that you may nourish us ; that we rack our brains to discover how in those spots as

yet inhabited by but few men, we can make our race more numerous. Does all this please you, lady and mistress ?'

And the earth lets everything be done on it, only sometimes her innermost being trembles in sudden horror, and towns and palaces begin to totter.

Then again for whole centuries she shows no sign of life. Like every good mother, she gladly endures everything from her bad children. She hides and keeps secret their sins, and in their stead endures the punishment of Heaven. She is not angry with them ; she does not punish them. She tends and educates them, and asks no gratitude in return. She only grieves in secret sorrow, and consumes herself in eternal grief ; for the fate of her children, of her self-seeking heartless children, leaves her neither rest nor repose. Sorrow and trouble, human dirt and sin, gradually undermine her strength, and then all at once the poor Earth falls sick.

O, how are men cast down when the Earth is sick !

They fall, as the parasitic aphis-worms fall from the yellow leaves.

Among the terrified nations appear new forms of death, whose names are hitherto unknown ; a breath of air casts to earth the strong, the brave man, so that he never rises again. In vain he hides

himself behind unapproachable stone-walls, in vain he anoints his body with the most precious balm, and holds back his breath. Invisible Death knows no locked doors, and seeks out just those who fear him. No tainted air, no infection, are required ; men hear the name of Death, they tremble and die.

It is no human disease on the earth ; the Earth herself is sick.

I can quite well remember those days. At the time I was still perhaps a schoolboy (I say perhaps, because I cannot state with certainty when I began to grow old), the universal terror affected me but little ; I rather enjoyed the novelty of the situation. We were not allowed to go to school ; we had holidays for an indefinite period, which, I do not attempt to deny, caused us no little satisfaction. Our town was shut off by cordons from the examination of strangers. My good father—whose gentle serious countenance still stands before me—put on his old sword, and also set out to guard the cordon. Not the whole English fleet could have inspired me with greater confidence than did that sword. Our dear good mother hung round each of our necks a little packet of camphor—now we were convinced that nothing could happen to us—and forbade us to eat melons and peaches. We were good obedient children, and would on no consideration have disobeyed her orders. And, as

though Nature wanted to mock us, our fruit-trees were that year covered with the finest and most tempting fruits. We let them rot untouched. We had a worthy doctor—a friend of the family—who went in the greatest danger from one sick person to another. I can still see before me his white hair, his red cheeks, and his straight upright form : he used to make fun of us, and to have the finest yellow melons brought out of our garden, which he cut up before our eyes, and devoured with an excellent appetite. ‘Who is not afraid will not die,’ he used to say ; ‘we need only live temperately, and trust in God.’ When we asked him whether it was true that the air was filled with little invisible insects, who caused the illness when they entered the breath, he laughed, and answered, ‘Whoever believes in these insects would do better, instead of asking, to keep his mouth shut ; for while he is speaking, they are walking into his throat.’ And when, day after day, morning and evening, I heard in the street the monotonous tolling of bells, the sad lament of the dead, and the sobs and cries of the widows and orphans ; when we were told that in the next house the whole family had died in two days ; that in the house opposite doors and windows stood open, and that no one went either out or in,—then I felt so glad that I could fold my hands and think that we were still all together, that as yet no one had left our house for ever, and

that God had protected us from all sorrow. Our hope was feeble—indeed, on what could it rest?—but our faith was strong and reassuring.

These impressions are all I remember of that fatal year.

And alas! elsewhere this year was not content to weave shining tears into its mourning mantle; it needed blood too, and much blood, to adorn it.

* * * * *

The open circular letters issued through the country flew from village to village, and gave the wise men of the various districts news of the approaching danger, which was as little understood by the writers of the epistles as by those to whom they were addressed.

The wise men of the villages, the judges and schoolmasters, received orders to make the contents of the epistles comprehensible to ignorant people.

To make something comprehensible! Men who possessed the most elementary knowledge were to explain to peasants who sought the supernatural in the most natural phenomena. And these people were to explain a matter that was and still is a secret to all the wise men in the world.

Michael Kordé, one of the worthy teachers of Hetfalu, had assembled his great and little subjects

for the last day of school in that year. Drawing from his pocket the official notice, which had then become unrecognisable through dirt and grease, he announced to his scholars that he acquainted them with the contents of this document chiefly that they might afterwards repeat it at home to their parents. Since their parents did not go to school, there was no other way in which they could learn what the worthy committee required of them.

‘Boys,’ he then continued, raising his voice, after he had blown his nose and expectorated, ‘here you see the document of the gracious President of the Tribunal, who announces to me that the schools must be closed, and that the whole people must rise like one man. And they must rise, for the following sufficient reason. Because, in the first place :

‘A terrible sickness is coming into the land—no, not is coming, because a terrible sickness has come into the land that is generally called “*morbus*” by us learned men. Whoever is attacked by this *morbus* has not even time to expectorate ; he falls down and dies. It is all up with him, no help is possible.

‘This is what causes the *morbus*: the gall is poured out on to the spirit, which causes a gall fever. A gall fever, boys ; so take care that you do not put me in a passion.

‘And where is this *morbus*? In green melons, in yellow peaches, in short, in all this year’s fruit.

Therefore, whoever does not wish to die at once must not venture to eat fruit.'

Here Kordé was interrupted in his speech. Some young Scythians on the last benches had actually dared to laugh out loud.

'Miska Turtejik, long-eared idiot, what am I speaking of now, eh?'

The boy opened his eyes wide, stood up, and answered, stammering,

'That we must not steal peaches out of the reverend gentleman's garden.'

'O, indeed? Come here then, here to me.'

And the future citizen was pulled hither and thither by the ears, as though Kordé's object were to make them still longer and more projecting than they were already. And yet the poor boy had not answered so stupidly. He thought this command was only inserted into the epistle to frighten away the people from the minister's orchard. In the whole village no one else occupied himself with cultivating fruit.

'Let us return to the matter in hand. Attention, boys!

'Besides this, bathing is very dangerous, and washing the body in cold water; for this may also injure the spirit. On the other hand, it is good to drink a great deal of brandy, for that gives power and strengthens the spirit. It is also dangerous to work on an empty stomach, to think and study

much ; on the other hand, we ought to eat a great deal of meat, and not walk about in the sun.'

This passage received the loud approval of all the hearers.

'But since, in spite of all precautions, it is not impossible that some one out of another village may bring this morbus in his *szur* (peasant's cloak) or knapsack into our village, the strict order is issued that no one is to leave the village, either walking or driving, and that no stranger shall be admitted. But if a traveller wants to pass through it, he must first be locked up in the ox-stall outside the village, his clothes must be fumigated, he himself washed in warm alkali, and every piece of money found about him rubbed with ashes. For this dangerous work the gipsies of the place will everywhere be employed.'

Here M. Kordé made a little pause, to watch the impression of his words upon his hearers. Then he continued as follows :

'But if, in spite of all these wise precautions, any one should have the morbus, there is only one remedy, and that is, *Bisanthum*, *bismuthum*, *bismuthi*, *neutrius secundæ*. Hungarian *biszmuta*, Slovakish *biszmuthim*, and German *biszmuthen*. Hem, hem !'

Here the worthy schoolmaster coughed violently, for now ought to have followed the explanation of what that mysterious something consists,

whose name he himself had only just now spelt out of the lines of the document.

‘And now you must prick up your ears ; for I shall examine you afterwards, to see whether you have remembered everything I am telling you.

‘Bismuth is a powder — no, not a powder. Bismuth is a fluid, or — yes, it is a powder — whose colour — whose colour is one that cannot be described. It is prepared from all manner of ingredients ; its taste resembles that of a certain kind of pastry, and its smell is very faint. Whoever takes bismuth will be cured. At first a teaspoonful must be taken (the reverend gentleman will lend teaspoons) ; if that is no use, a tablespoonful ; then, if you feel no better, two tablespoonful, and so on, till the morbus leaves the sick man. Bismuth can be had at the chemist’s at Kaselan ; whoever does not purchase bismuth has only himself to thank if he dies. Poor people will, as a special favour, receive it gratis from Dr. Sarkantys ; if they refuse to take it, Dr. Sarkantys will force them, and he will also have bismuth sprinkled in the wells. It is therefore better to make friends willingly with bismuth than to go straight to the devil.’

The susceptible boys broke out into loud laughter at these last words.

One of the loudest laughers took the liberty of stretching out two fingers, which merely signified that the boy wanted to ask something.

‘Well, what do you want, Slizik?’

‘Please, sir, is that—that—is that sweet?’

‘Asine! have I not told you what *that* is? You were not attentive. Stretch out your hand.’

The boy received a blow on the palm of his hand.

‘The other one!’ And the same execution was dealt for the second time.

‘Stand up, Gustel Klinza, and explain to this Nebulo what I have been speaking about.’

Gustel Klinza was the first on his bench. He wore the best coat, and his father leased the brandy factory. Reasons enough why Gustel should be the master’s favourite. The boy quickly hid away the penknife with which he had been carving on the bench and stood up, blushing to the ears with fright. In his anxiety to answer well, he opened his mouth as wide as he could.

‘Well, my boy, what did I say?—was it not that bismuth is like—’

‘Bisbuss is a powder prepared from a fluid, and from all sorts of things, and it tastes like cake,’ jabbered this young hopeful.

‘*Bene, præstanter, eruditissime* (Those who attend know something).’

Gustel Klinza returned to his seat delighted.

‘One thing more I must tell you, and that you must tell your parents at home too, that in these dangerous times there is nothing so good as a drop

of brandy in the morning on an empty stomach, another at noon, and one more before going to bed ; and so on whenever one feels any foreign matter not belonging there in the stomach. That is the best of all. And you, Gustel Klinza, be sure not to forget to tell your father that the rector is very much afraid of the morbus, and that my brandy-bottle is still at your place.'

Gustel Klinza hid the quill, of which he was just going to make a pistol, in his prayer-book, and promised to deliver all these messages at home.

'And now let us pray ; and then, till the morbus ceases, there will be no more school.'

Great was the joy of the boys at these words. Gustel Klinza shot off his quill-pistol under the bench : the potato-bullet just hit the rector's nose ; whereupon he dragged Joseph Slizik off the bench, and gave him six blows with the cane, though he knew that Slizik was not the culprit.

Amidst the howls of the boy, the others began to sing. As long as they sang low notes, the rector's voice was heard above the rest ; but when there were any high notes, the boys joined in with such a will that the windows shook. The rector beat time every now and then, dealing one or other of the boys a blow with his long ruler.

Then Gustel Klinza said the prayer ; and, in his delight that the morbus had come, and therefore there would be no school for a long time, he

babbled the evening instead of the morning prayer. The rector did not notice it. Scarcely was the 'Amen' spoken than the boys rushed at the door. They knew from experience that M. Kordé was in the habit of 'bagging' the last in the schoolroom for the noise made by all ; therefore, as they could not get off without a noise, every one tried to be out first. Then they poured into the street, and in their delight that the morbus had come, and therefore, if all went well, there would be no school for several weeks, they all threw themselves, as at a sign given, on the Lutheran schoolboys, who were just playing ball before their church ; threw stones at them, and hit some on the head, and made such a dreadful noise that all the dogs in the village began to bark in chorus. In this way did they announce to their parents that M. Kordé had granted to his hopeful pupils extra holidays, and this because the morbus was coming ; and in such dangerous times it is not well for large numbers of people to be together.

* * * * *

All the inhabitants of the village, old and young, were pouring out of church, and going home. On every countenance could be seen the expression of dumb terror.

In church also the contents of the circular epistle had been read, and the minister reminded the faithful in a little address that trust in God's

blessed providence and a pure Christian conscience were worth more than any remedy—than cordons and Bismuth powders. ‘Nevertheless,’ said he, ‘we are all in God’s hands; and if we have lived well, we shall die well too. The just man need not fear death.’

On the steps of the church crouched the old witch, known in the village as the screech-owl. In her lap she had a heap of healing herbs, by her side lay her crutch, and she leaned her chin on her right hand, which rested on her knees. There she sat, counting all who left the church—one, two, three. At three she began afresh. Who knows what she meant by that? Perhaps every third person is destined to be a victim. Who can tell?

All had departed; only she and the shaggy Hanák, the bellringer, remained behind.

As often happens, a little dog approached the church-door, and popped his head into the church. When Hanák noticed the animal he gave it a kick, and when it ran away howling, he threw his bunch of keys after it.

The old witch lifted up her scraggy hand threateningly at the bellringer, and spoke in a hollow sepulchral tone that made him shiver:

‘Hanák, shaggy Hanák, why do you drive the dog away from here? I tell you, shaggy Hanák, that it would be better for you and for others to be a dog than to be called a man; for a time will come

when not the tolling of your bells, but the barking of the dogs, will accompany the dead to the grave. Therefore do no harm to the dogs, Hanák, shaggy Hanák.'

The bellringer had not the courage to answer. Slowly and trembling he locked the church-door, and when he went away he avoided the old woman. He felt almost giddy already, and his feet tottered.

And when at last, the minister, to whom he handed the church keys, announced to him that, at the breaking out of the plague, the dead were to be buried without tolling of bells, so that the people might not be too much alarmed at the many deaths, then his hair began to stand on end, and he felt as if each hair on his head weighed a hundred-weight. The dogs were barking in the yards. So from this time forth they must accompany the dead?

This thought was so painful to his already troubled heart that he felt himself obliged, in order to lessen his grief, to turn into the public-house instead of going home, where he found the wise men of the village debating in numerous assembly what was to be done to encounter the great trouble now coming upon them.

[October, 1882



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